DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 291 716 SP 029 955

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TITLE A Case Study of a Beginning Teacher's Development of Practical Knowledge.
PUB DATE Sep 87
NOTE 104p.; Master's Thesis, Queen's University.
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses - Master Theses (042) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Beginning Teachers; Elementary Education; Grade 2; *Metacognition; Professional Development; *Role Perception; Self Actualization; Self Evaluation (Individuals); Teacher Administrator Relationship; Teacher Attitudes; *Teacher Student Relationship; *Teaching Experience; *Theory Practice Relationship

ABSTRACT

This study explores the development of a beginning teacher's practical knowledge as expressed in her reflections on her actions during her first year of teaching. The view of practical knowledge constructed by Elbaz (1983) and extended by Clandinin (1986) forms the conceptual basis of the work, allied with the concept of reflection-in-action developed by Schon (1983). Practical knowledge is seen here as a conceptualization of the kinds of knowledge demonstrated by teachers as they are teaching. Ten interviews at regular intervals during Rachel's first year of teaching provided the data for the study. Through these interviews, it was possible to trace the development of her practical knowledge. Analysis of the data deals with this development, seen through her reflections on her own practices. The study illustrates the importance to Rachel of regular discussion of her teaching experiences and her growing awareness of her own professional development. One chapter of the thesis describes the researcher's own perceptions of the research and her reflections on her role in the study. The study concludes with an exploration of ways in which the concept of practical knowledge can be extended through the study of beginning teachers and how the dialectical model can be a valuable way to gain insight into a teacher's perceptions of practice. (Author)

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A CASE STUDY OF A BEGINNING TEACHER'S DEVELOPMENT OF PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE

by

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Education
in conformity with the requirements for
the degree of Master of Education

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September, 1987

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Abstract

This study explores the development of a beginning teacher's practical knowledge as expressed in her reflections on her actions during her first year of teaching. The view of practical knowledge constructed by Elbaz (1983) and extended by Clandinin (1986) forms the conceptual basis of the work, allied with the concept of reflection-in-action developed by Schön (1983). Practical knowledge is seen here as a conceptualization of the kinds of knowledge demonstrated by teachers as they are teaching.

Ten interviews at regular intervals during Rachel's first year of teaching provided the data for the study. Through these interviews, it was possible to trace the development of her practical knowledge. Analysis of the data deals with this development, seen through her reflections on her own practices. The study illustrates the importance to Rachel of regular discussion of her teaching experiences and her growing awareness of her own professional development.

One chapter of the thesis describes the researcher's own perceptions of the research and her reflections on her role in the study. The study concludes with an exploration of ways in which the concept of practical knowledge can be extended through the study of beginning teachers and how the dialectical model can be a valuable way to gain insight into a teacher's perceptions of practice.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Focus of the Study

This study focusses on a beginning teacher's development of practical knowledge. Building on the concept of practical knowledge as developed by Elbaz (1983), the study investigates how a beginning teacher develops practical knowledge and learns to use it. According to Elbaz, practical knowledge is a conceptualization of the kinds of knowing demonstrated by practitioners in practice. The inherent value and meaning of practical knowledge in the context of the profession of teaching is accepted and acknowledged in studies of teachers' practical knowledge, providing a basis for the studies of teacher thought and action. The concept of reflection-in-action, (Schön, 1983) is also central to this study. The reflective process, described by Schön, focusses on practitioners examining and learning from their practices, acknowledging the growth and development of practical knowledge. Through reflection, practitioners can become better acquainted with their practice, seeking new perspectives for puzzling events of practice, working with the problems and learning to frame them in alternative ways. This study uses the concepts developed by Elbaz and Schön to examine a beginning teacher's development of practical knowledge, with special attention to how she learns to deal with problematic and puzzling situations.

This study is a documentation of "Rachel" as she moves through her first year of teaching. From September to June, in ten interviews, Rachel discusses her experiences of learning to teach.

Chapter 1 describes the focus and the educational significance of the study, and discusses the research strategy. Chapter 2 reviews relevant research literature, and develops the conceptual orientations that form the basis of the study. Chapters 3 and 4 present data from the interviews that document Rachel's journey throughout the year with discussions of her developing practical knowledge and her reflections on that development. Chapter 5 examines my own reflections on the research, drawing on data from my fieldnotes and interviews that express my personal interests and concerns as I journeyed through the year with Rachel. Chapter 6 discusses the implications of the study and its potential contributions to the field of research on teacher thinking. Two interviews are appended to provide the reader with access to the interviewing style and to extended passages of data at two different stages in Rachel's development. Appendix A is the fourth interview, conducted November 26, 1986. Appendix B is the seventh interview, conducted March 12, 1987.

Educational Significance of the Study

Learning to teach may be a complex and difficult endeavour, and the types of support and attention that can be most helpful to beginning teachers are only poorly understood. Investigations of the processes by which beginning teachers develop practical knowledge of teaching are one way to enhance our understanding. A description of the development of a beginning teacher's practical knowledge can provide further insights into the concept of practical knowledge, particularly in its developmental stages. It is the developmental aspect of practical knowledge that is the specific focus of this study. Our current understanding of practical knowledge can be enriched by the notion that a beginning teacher develops an awareness of practical knowledge as she moves through the process of learning to teach. It is also important

to extend the concept of reflection-in-action beyond Schön's accounts of experienced professionals to the context of the professional who is beginning a career. Fostering reflection in the context of a beginning practitioner's work can lead to increased understanding of that work for both the practitioner and the researcher attempting to gain insights into the beginning teacher's practice.

The Research Strategy

The participant in this study, Rachel, is in her first year of teaching at an elementary school in southern Ontario. I became acquainted with Rachel several months before this study began, as she was completing the final semester of her concurrent education program at Queen's University, and I quickly became aware of how articulate and frank she was as we discussed her views of teaching. She agreed to participate in this study as she entered into her first year of teaching, and we began to work together soon after the beginning of the fall term. Between October 1986 and June 1987, I recorded 10 interviews with Rachel. My visits to Rachel began as observations of her class followed by an interview, but soon changed to involve me as a participant in the activities of Rachel's class, followed by an interview, usually held outside of the school. Changing the initial research strategy was part of the development in relationship that is discussed in detail in Chapters 3, 4 and 5.

Elbaz (1983), in her study of "Sarah," argues that the study of a case is a particularly fruitful method for conducting research into teacher thinking. Throughout the research literature, the case study is seen as an appropriate design for developing an understanding of teachers' knowledge from their own points of view. In open discussion, practitioners may discuss their practices from a personal perspective, free from previously imposed structures of research.

The researcher stands to gain much from such discussion, and methodology becomes a key element. The dialectical model chosen by Elbaz in her work with Sarah and by Clandinin in her (1986) study of two teachers forms the basis for this study. The dialectical model suggests that the relationship between the researcher and the participant be of a conversational, give-and-take variety. The agenda for the discussion can arise spontaneously or be set by either participant. This provides for free and open conversation, in which both parties feel their needs and concerns have been respected and provided for. In order to probe into the complex world of a teacher, the dialectical model of interviewing is a powerful way to foster insightful and reflective discussion.

This is a study of how one beginning teacher experiences and thinks about the process of learning to teach. A case study can be a vivid description of how one teacher views her work and gives an account of those views. In the context of a case study, it is possible to pursue issues and matters of interest that arise spontaneously or unexpectedly, without disrupting the research, for it is those issues and matters of interest that become the research. In this study, the dialectical model adopted as the basis for our relationship is paralleled in the methodological model chosen for the research. The study of a case underscores the notion that a teacher functions as a whole person, not as a fragmented and compartmentalized phenomenon to be studied without context or environment.

This study, and studies of this nature, may further our understanding of how beginning teachers experience the process of learning to teach, and explore how their views of practice can be significant additions to the literature on teacher thinking. Literature relevant to the field of teacher thinking, the concept of practical knowledge, and the perspective of reflection-in-action are discussed in Chapter 2.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Chapter 2 reviews literature relevant to the main argument of this study: the development of a beginning teacher's practical knowledge becomes more explicit through reflective inquiry. The literature review is presented in three sections: Research on Teacher Thinking; The Concept of Practical Knowledge and The Reflective Process. The sections are interdependent in nature, together providing an account of our present understanding of the concept of practical knowledge and how it develops.

Research on Teacher Thinking

The area of research known as teacher thinking is large and relatively new. Clark and Peterson (1986) have organized, summarized and commented upon the representative studies in this field and their report is a comprehensive guide to a diverse and unwieldly body of work. Research on teachers' thinking is comprised of many facets. Studies dealing with teachers' implicit theories and the research exploring the concept of practical knowledge are most relevant to this study.

Research on teachers' implicit theories, unarticulated beliefs and perceptions about their work is actually the smallest and newest part of the literature. Many of the studies are small-sample descriptions, yet significant in their power to elicit teachers' thoughts on how they make sense of their practices. Clark and Peterson have identified nine studies of teachers' implicit theories, all conducted since 1976. From these studies Clark and Peterson conclude that "teachers

do seem to hold implicit theories about their work and that these conceptual systems can be made more explicit through a variety of direct and indirect inquiry techniques" (p. 291).

Implicit theories and beliefs appear to be grounded in a teacher's fundamental thinking about his or her work. For that reason, it is likely that in discussions of practice, beliefs and values that are implicit will become more explicit, through examples of practical situations. There are few studies dealing only with implicit theoretical views. Of the nine studies identified by Clark and Peterson, the one most relevant to this work is Elbaz's (1983) study of practical knowledge. Elbaz is interested in exploring one teacher's implicit theories as they were described within the context of practical knowledge. Elbaz reports that the teacher in her study, "Sarah," holds an implicit theory of knowledge which informs her practice. Clinical interviews and class observations provide Elbaz with the means to elicit from Sarah how her implicit theories and beliefs contribute to her practical knowledge, and give that knowledge substance and shape. The concept of practical knowledge is significant to Elbaz's work and to this study. The next section of the literature review deals with how that concept is presented in the research literature and how it is related to this study.

The Concept of Practical Knowledge

Elbaz (1983) works with the concept of practical knowledge in her study of one high school teacher, "Sarah." Elbaz argues that teachers do possess a body of knowledge appropriate to their work, knowledge that has not been given sufficient credibility or status. Practical knowledge, then, grows out of experience, and is a combination of knowledge about students, social structures, subject matter and includes knowledge of instruction and classroom management techniques. "All of these kinds of knowledge, as integrated by the individual teacher in terms of

personal values and beliefs and as oriented to her practical situation, will be referred to here as practical knowledge" (p. 5). Elbaz's study is detailed and interesting, yet because Sarah is an experienced teacher, it does not so much paint a developmental picture, but gives an account of Sarah's practical knowledge. The main findings of Elbaz's study are that practical knowledge has content, form and structure. The organization of Sarah's practical knowledge into these categories occupies most of the study, and leads the reader away from the notion that practical knowledge must first be developed through experience before it can be articulated.

Level of experience appears to be a significant issue in discussing practical knowledge and tracing its development. This study proposes to examine how with a beginning teacher, growing experience may lead to a developmental discussion of knowledge about practice. This is not to say that an experienced teacher will hold a static view of practice, but that his or her practical knowledge may be developed to the extent that is exists as a substantial body of knowledge rather than a new and possibly uncertain basis for practical thought and action. A beginning teacher will be in the midst of gaining practical experience and as a result, his or her views of practice may be different from the experienced teacher's. An embryonic knowledge of practice will be subject to greater change and may feel the impact of additional experience more dramatically than will the practical knowledge of an experienced practitioner. Thus the concept of practical knowledge may have a further definition: it will take on a different meaning to a beginning practitioner who is developing experience and knowledge, as compared to an experienced practitioner who will likely be able to discuss practical knowledge from the standpoint of experience with practice.

The concept of practical knowledge appears elsewhere in the research literature, but only briefly in most studies of teacher thinking. It gains a position of prominence in Clandinin's

(1986) study of two classroom teachers, and their "personal" practical knowledge. Again, practical knowledge is depicted as growing out of experience, but in Clandinin's study, the two teachers studied have many years of teaching experience to draw on as they discuss their practices. Studies of beginning teachers' developments of practical knowledge are not yet widely available. Johnston (1986) described the development of one aspect of practical knowledge: a beginning teacher's knowledge of interactions with students.

The methodologies involved in studies of practical knowledge demonstrate the importance of consistency of intent and method. Both Elbaz and Clandinin argue for the dialectical relationship of theory and practice as it is personified in the dialectical relationships they establish with their participants. Both researchers discuss the importance of reciprocal relationships with their participants in research, the teachers in their studies. Elbaz (1983) states,

> The fact that the person being studied has feelings, values, needs and purposes which condition his participation in the research, can enrich and validate the study which elicits them as much as it can sabotage the study which ignores or suppresses them. (p. 58)

Clandinin (1986) discusses her choice of methodology as it relates to the relationship of theory and practice that serves as a model for her own relationship with her participants:

> I justified the choice of methodologies, in part, from the dialectical relationships between theory and practice which they exhibit and, in part, from the dialectical relationships that characterize the interdependence between the researcher and that which is being researched. All aspects of the research process, negotiation of entry, participant observation, the interview process and the interpretive accounts, are characterized by a dialectical relationship. (p. 167)

By showing interest in their research participants, researchers are basing their methodologies in the experience of the participants. Participants are seen to be active contributors to the study, with the ability to enhance and enrich the findings. The sharing of interpretations can underscore the process as a shared one and the study as a whole will profit. In all discussions of teacher

thought and practical knowledge, the method of eliciting thoughts on practice is extremely significant. Both Elbaz and Clandinin report that the methodological choices they made influenced the findings of their studies and both studies supported and created a dialectical relationship of participant to researcher. Both Elbaz and Clandinin appear to go beyond their data, moving outside of a dialectical relationship to personally create conceptualizations of practical knowledge. For example, Elbaz develops an organizational system for the concept of practical knowledge. She reports that practical knowledge has content, structure and form, and gives detailed analyses of these categories, using her participant's discussions of practice to do so. Yet the study of Sarah's practical knowledge appears to steer away from more immediate problems of practice. Elbaz (1983) states,

> It is true that she [Sarah] had expressed a willingness to have her view of herself and her teaching "shaken up." But the particular period in which Sarah was working on a new subject matter, and moving into a new setting, was an inauspicious time to challenge her sense of competence by calling into question the only aspect of her work on which she could then rely, her ability to structure classroom learning. (p. 164)

It seems then that Elbaz's conceptualization of practical knowledge is built on the aspects of her practice that Sarah felt comfortable discussing with Elbaz and does not realize the full potential of the dialectical relationship that was established. If Elbaz and Sarah had both felt that sharing problems of practice was as important to understanding Sarah's practical knowledge as understanding its structure and form, the conceptualization that was eventually developed in Elbaz's work might have been quite different.

Clandinin builds upon Elbaz's categories and develops her own conceptualization of practical knowledge. She speaks of "imagery" that "minds" the practices of the participants in her study. Clandinin defends her concern with the retention of her participants' distinctiveness and individuality by stating that the contruct of image "has been used in my work as a conceptual

device that enables me to give an account of the practices and the distinctiveness of the whole person" (p. 129). Yet the overriding impression the study makes is that of a contribution to our understanding of imagery as a construct, as a way to conceptualize practice, rather than a contibution to our understanding of two teachers' discussions of their practical knowledge.

Elbaz and Clandinin both place a methodology of reflective inquiry at the centre of their studies, yet they neglect the ways in which reflection may reveal how practical knowledge develops with experience. In a review of Elbaz's work, Yates (1985), commends the work as a useful way for teachers to learn more about their own practical knowledge through reflection on their actions, alone or with another teacher. But Yates' criticism of this dimension of Elbaz's work is that the reflections might only reveal the "logic of a form of knowledge" (p. 129). Her argument appears to be that Elbaz, in her construction of structure and form of practical knowledge, may have left no room for reflections on practical knowledge alone, or in this case, the development of practical knowledge. Clandinin (1986) defines reflection as "a reforming of my assumptions about teachers and classrooms and a reconstruction of my experience with teachers and schools" (p. 164). Clandinin characterizes reflection as a challenge to change, to reconstruct and revise assumptions of practice. For Clandinin, reflection is a useful process that enables her to assess and evaluate her research. She spends time reflecting on her role as researcher and the implications of her study for research in teacher thinking. Intents and assumptions of the research changed as the study proceeded, due mostly to growing awareness of possibilities within the research that would shift its emphasis slightly but not disrupt the original purpose. The reflections of Aileen and Stephanie [participants in the study] are not explicitly shown to hold influence over their personal practical knowledge. Clandinin's *own* personal practical knowledge of Stephanie and Aileen may have changed as the research moved

forward, but there is no indication that the dialectical relationship she developed with them encouraged reflection on their part that would have changed their knowledge of themselves as practitioners.

Reflection for the researcher alone seems to devalue the dialectical relationship between researcher and participant that Clandinin argues for throughout her work. This study builds on Clandinin and Elbaz's notions of participant-importance, but extends the reflective inquiry approach to accommodate reflections of both participant and researcher. My efforts to understand a beginning teacher's development of practical knowledge are seen as constructive contributions to the dialectical nature of the relationship, aiding in the understanding and interpretation of that practical knowledge.

The Reflective Process

As Clark and Peterson conclude their report of research on teacher thinking, they make a composite drawing of the "new" professional that is emerging in recent research.

> The emerging picture of the teacher as a reflective professional is a developmental one that begins during undergraduate teacher educatiion [or even earlier] and continues to grow and change with professional experience. The maturing professional teacher is one who has taken some steps toward making explicit his or her implicit theories and beliefs about learners, curriculum, subject matter and the teacher's role. They reflect on and analyze the apparent effects of their own teaching and apply the results of these reflections to their future plans and actions. In short, they have become researchers on their own teaching effectiveness. (p. 292)

Teachers are beginning to be viewed as reflective, inquiring individuals who possess knowledge about their work and are able to articulate that knowledge, given conducive research environments. Researchers are learning much about how to think about teaching as well as how to elicit teachers' thoughts on teaching. Two aspects of Clark and Peterson's (1986) summary will serve to close the discussion of relevant research:

> A vast majority of teachers participating in this research have been experienced teachers. The literature provides us with little sense of how teacher planning, interactive thinking and decision making, and implicit theories and beliefs develop over time, and, therefore, what kinds of interventions might help these processes along. (p. 292)

The implications of this statement are that research dealing with beginning teachers' developments of practical knowledge would be useful to the field of teacher thinking, but that as of yet there is little to look to for guidance and example. There is, however, much research on the beginning teacher. Corcoran (1981) states that one important reason to study beginning teachers is to identify gaps between what the beginner knows on a theoretical level and what he or she actually does on a practical level. This may be an important consideration, but it would appear that to study the actual development of practical knowledge, to focus on the reality of practice, would be a further extension of Corcoran's rationale. Identifying gaps may help to move forward into experimentation with one's knowledge; it is not enough to simply acknowledge a deficiency in knowing.

Zumwalt (1984) finds that teachers encouraged to struggle and experiment and to treat the state of not-knowing as the norm (rather than a sign of incompetence and failure) are more likely to try to develop beyond the survival stage of teaching. Zumwalt summarizes this argument by stating, "The biggest shock with coping with reality is to realize that perfection is an impossibility" (p. 140). Research on beginning teachers gives many "remedies" for the transitional difficulties a new teacher may experience as he or she moves from pre-service to in-service work. Included is advice such as Zumwalt gives, and prescriptive ideas for administrators and teacher educators. Rarely does a research article suggest that the beginning teacher look to a personal knowledge of practice and draw upon it as that knowledge develops. Yet the concept of practical knowledge lends itself to the experiential reference. Without

increasing experience, one's knowledge-base cannot be expected to grow. The reflective process is an avenue open to all professionals, beginning and experienced, to help make sense of experience and learn from it in ways constructive to further practice.

The second element in Clark and Peterson's (1986) report that is of relevance here is their conclusion that, "the research shows that thinking plays an important part in teaching, and that the image of a teacher as a reflective professional...is not far fetched" (p. 292). To acknowledge reflectiveness is one component of research. To create an atmosphere of research that fosters reflection and to use it to help teachers articulate their professional knowledge is an even more exciting possibility.

Schön's (1983) account of "reflection-in-action" is built upon those phenomena of practice that are puzzling, problematic or unique in some way. Reframing the situation may help to suggest new opportunities or ways to deal with the puzzle and thus lead to further experimentation. By reflecting, practitioners are allowing themselves to experience surprise, bewilderment and confusion--feelings that are often negative in nature. In the atmosphere of experimentation, these feelings can become constructive and worthwhile features of the role of teacher. As practitioners reflect upon their practices, their practical knowledge grows along with their experiences. Reframing is a way of bringing new meaning to a situation, developing a different understanding that suggests different professional actions. The problematic situation may not always be neatly "solved" through reframing, but by trying to see the problem as having potential for change, it becomes less of a problem and more of a changeable component of the situation.

Former experiences play a part in the process of reframing and reflecting. Practitioners may develop a series of experiences that become useful to them in a later situation. When

reframing the puzzle, the practitioner may look back to former experiences and draw upon one or more that had similar characteristics to the current one. Schön calls this series of former experiences a practitioner's "repertoire" and the selection of a similar experience, the use of an "exemplar." Familiar situations can then function as exemplars for new, unfamiliar ones.

Schön's contribution to our understanding of professional knowledge is many-faceted. It may be useful for anyone engaged in action of any sort to reflect upon their actions and so learn from them. The concept of reflection-in-action is especially useful for educators wishing to think about and learn from their own work. In conjunction with the emerging picture of teachers as reflective professionals, reflection implies responsibility. To manage a dilemma rather than experience it suggests that the manager is able to impose some sort of order or control upon the experience and thus change it to meet his or her specifications. Reflection also implies the ability to take risks. To be willing to change one's practices and to reflect upon them demands that practitioners engaged in such a process be open to change and experimentation. Puzzling situations must be viewed with a positive attitude, not ignored or feared.

The beginning teacher is in a unique position to profit from reflection-in-action, when it becomes possible to trust one's own thoughts and analyses. He or she may frequently be puzzled or surprised; many events may take on some of these characteristics! However, unlike more experienced practitioners, beginning teachers may be more open to change and experimentation. Reflection-in-action acknowledges and even welcomes the state of "not-knowing" for it proposes to change its nature. From being an uncertain and therefore undesirable condition, "not-knowing" becomes a state leading to experimentation, change and growth. Lampert (1985) seems to share this view in the following statement about understanding teachers' work:

> Our understanding of the work of teaching might be enhanced if we explored what teachers do and when they choose to endure and make use of conflicts. Such

> understanding will be difficult to acquire if we assume that what is needed to solve them is knowledge that can be produced outside the classroom. We need to adopt an image of teaching which takes account of the possibility that the teacher herself is a resource in managing the problems of educational practice. (p. 194)

Summary

The review of the research on teacher thinking suggests interesting possibilities for further work in this area. Eliciting implicit theories and beliefs from teachers is important to increase our understanding of how teachers think and work. The concept of practical knowledge can take on different meanings, largely dependent upon the experiential frame of reference a practitioner has. A beginning teacher's discussions of practical knowledge may reveal its developmental aspects, whereas studies of more experienced teachers may produce an articulation of practical knowledge that is understood from the perspective of experience.

Methodology is significant to studies of teachers' practical knowledge. Establishing a dialectical relationship between researcher and participant requires the participant to take an active role in understanding personal views of practice, with a sense that his or her reflections are valid and may help to shape the research. Reflection-in-action can help to maintain the dialectical relationship between researcher and participant. By encouraging the participant to reflect, the researcher has access to immediate reflections on practice as well as reflections on knowledge of practice that the participant uses to help guide his or her work.

A beginning teacher presents exciting possibilities for research on practical knowledge. Her reflections may provide a clearer picture of how practical knowledge is developed and understood. Thus the participant in this study will be actively engaged in her work and in her understanding of it.

Chapter 3

DEVELOPING PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE: The First Four Months

Setting the Scene

Rachel completed the Concurrent Bachelor of Education Program at Queen's University in 1986. Her practice teaching internship ran from November 1985 to April 1986 at a local school and while there, she participated with me in a clinical supervision project. I found her to be a frank and open person who was concerned about her teaching from two viewpoints: she wanted to successfully carry out her duties as a student teacher, and she wanted to evaluate how her teaching affected the students she worked with.

When the clinical supervision project came to a conclusion, we agreed to stay in touch, as we were both interested in maintaining the contact that had been established. Early in September, I had formulated a rough outline of my area of research interest: I wanted to do some work with a beginning teacher and explore with him or her the complexities of the first year of teaching. I contacted Rachel, and was very pleased to learn that she had obtained a job in southern Ontario, teaching Grade 3. On the phone, Rachel was excited to hear from me and welcomed the idea of having me come to explain my thesis research to her.

Before we could meet for the first interview, Rachel was transferred to another school in the area because of declining enrolment in one town and a boom in another. Rachel was quite upset and disoriented at this unexpected change only two weeks into her career. At the new

school Rachel was now teaching Grade 2, and because of the sudden arrival of the extra students that comprised her class, they were situated in the school library.

Clarendon Road Public School is a community school that encourages community participation and offers its facilities for such purposes. The gymnasium and library are two facilities that are available to the general public and as a result, Rachel was in quite a different situation from that of a "typical" classroom. She was given one side of the main library room to use as an area for instruction, but it was not unusual to see groups such as Block Parents showing films on the other side of the room or to observe other classes of children as they came to have their time in the library or at the computer terminal, also situated in the library.

The emotional and mental picture was as complex and stressful as the physical set-up, and I could see this reflected in the way Rachel talked about her initial experiences. I found myself feeling a sense of outrage at the perfunctory treatment Rachel had received upon her arrival at Clarendon Road. Part of this was due to my memories of my own first year of teaching, when I was the only new teacher to a staff of older and experienced teachers, with a principal who seemed quite unprepared to take on the task of assisting me as I tried to learn all my new duties and responsibilities. His attitude was marked by reluctance more than lack of knowledge, and his impatience and thinly disguised frustration with my repeated troubles in the classroom largely affected my development as a teacher that year and did nothing to encourage me to experiment and reflect upon my experiences. Upon meeting Rachel's principal and hearing about her initial experiences with him, I was reminded so strongly of my own first year that I could feel again the panic and the fear.

Rachel's principal gave her a brief and very formal welcome and intimated from his remarks that a new addition to his staff, a teacher who was in her first year, was the last thing

he needed or wanted. As a result, Rachel seemed to appreciate the opportunity to have a friendly ear to pour out her troubles to, and I was eager to listen. My first visit to Rachel was on October 1, 1986. This visit, and the next two consisted of an afternoon's observation in the classroom followed by an interview in Rachel's classroom after school was dismissed. The last interview of the fall term (November 26, 1986) was conducted following a half day involving my active participation in Rachel's class. The first interview was comprised mostly of discussion about Rachel's sudden move from one grade level to another, and her disappointment with the apparent non-transfer of practical information and general knowledge that she felt she should have brought with her from her teacher education experiences. Rachel was assailed by a strong feeling that the preservice courses provided at the Faculty of Education were not particularly useful in her present situation, and this was only adding to her general feelings of insecurity and nervousness. I was intensely interested in these feelings, and I sensed that Rachel would be able to articulate them in an honest and thoughtful way. I also knew from my own experience how important it could be for her to have someone to talk to on a regular basis. We agreed to start immediately, and to arrange to meet as regularly as possible. Had Rachel's school been closer to my place of work, we would have spent even more time together, but because of geographical distance we were restricted to meeting approximately every three weeks.

Practical Concerns and Ongoing Puzzles

> One must use words to describe a kind of knowing, and a change of knowing, which are probably not originally represented in words at all (Schön, 1983, p. 59).
>
> The beginning of serious learning is dissatisfaction with oneself (Mao Tse-Tung).

The data in Chapters 3 and 4 are presented as practical concerns and ongoing puzzles that form part of Rachel's development of practical knowledge. As she discusses these concerns and

puzzles, the reflective process she is engaged in provides a unique "window" on the developmental picture. Each concern or puzzle presented in these chapters has an ongoing nature; it is not a singular experience nor a problem awaiting a neat solution. The developmental character of Rachel's concerns and puzzles also reinforces the notion that reflection is not always straightforward or linear in nature; the evolution of a personal perspective is an experimental and often uncertain process.

It may be helpful to visualize the dilemmas as threads in a tapestry, emerging and continuing as pattern elements in the picture that the data creates. Through this image, one sees the collective as well as the individual roles of the elements. Each has its own time when it is most visible; each also supports and makes visible the others. In this complex relationship, the chronology of events serves to indicate the emergence of the separate concerns. The analysis of the first four interviews (October 1 and 7, 1986; November 7 and 26, 1986) is presented in this chapter. Chapter 4 will consider data from the remaining six interviews: January 22, 1987; February 27, 1987; March 12 and 19, 1987; April 22, 1987; June 4, 1987. The data presented in both Chapter 3 and 4 is coded according to date and speech number. The first number in the coding represents the speech, the "C" represents Rachel, and the final number indicates the number of the interview. For example, 32C6 is the 32nd speech of Rachel's in Interview Number 6.

What follows is a description of Rachel's initial concerns, accounts of her early reflections as expressed in the first four interviews, and a discussion of dilemmas of practice that begin to give her work substance and direction. Speeches of the interviewer throughout Chapters 3 and 4 are italicized.

The Nitty-Gritty

"Nitty-gritty" is a phrase that emerges in the first interview as a descriptor for the many significant yet largely invisible elements of teaching that work together to create a stable teaching and learning environment. Often a myriad of managerial details or logistical considerations, the "nitty-gritty" represents intricacies of teaching that Rachel soon finds immensely important, but that had not been an explicit part of her student-teacher experiences. Rachel finds herself suddenly not knowing how to operate in an environment she felt she had been prepared to be fairly comfortable in. At one point she states that she thinks she is as prepared as she could have been at this stage in her education, yet she lacks important kinds of knowledge that would help her function more efficiently and effectively. Examples of "nitty-gritty" knowledge include knowing how to arrange the physical set-up of a classroom, obtaining practical ideas for establishing classroom rules and routines, and deciding on location and use of human and material resources.

> They [Faculty of Education] emphasized things that I don't think needed to be emphasized and instead left out the important nitty-gritty stuff. (14C1) Mainly, too I think at [Faculty of Education] if they know you're doing primary-junior, they should have one class or some courses set up showing you exactly what is involved in the Curriculum Guidelines and showing you something for Core and giving you examples of Grades 1, 2, or 3. (6C1) For example, attendance folders, you have to have those ready for the secretaries, collecting the pizza money, all those added little things that can just throw up your whole day -- you'll get in trouble from the office if you don't have your things done. (13C1) And another thing, O.K. a very simple thing, but you know your books are all different lines. What lines go for Grade 1, what kinds of lines for Grade 2, what kind of paper should they use, what kinds of pencils -- can they use pens, markers -- you know, what do people advise? (16C1)

Here Rachel discusses her need for advice in the practical areas of how to keep the "machinery" of the classroom oiled and running smoothly. If one does not know how to collect pizza money, for example, or how to make and maintain an attendance folder, these may be the small details that can disrupt the day and hinder the more important events the teacher has planned.

Rachel is also concerned from the outset with somewhat larger issues. Record-keeping and accurate descriptions of a child's progress require a more complex sort of knowledge than that needed to organize the attendance folder, yet she feels that her knowledge in the area of record-keeping is negligible. Rachel senses that the combination of knowing how to make and use effective records is a sort of knowledge that she does not possess, but that would enable her to write good report cards and assess her students in a fair way. She describes the "Philosophy of Grading and Evaluation" course as sharing only the "why" and not the "how" of evaluating and reporting.

> And the other thing is record-keeping. There's no course at the [Faculty of Education] to teach that or that says, "This is a good way of record keeping." I mean sure we have "Grading and Evaluation" -- fine. We went through all the philosophy of how -- all the questions that people always ask about grading and evaluation. *Why do we do it?* Why do we do it, but not *how* we do it! And how do we do it in the most fair and accurate way possible? (18/19C1) Report cards are coming out soon, and what do you do? Are there any key phrases, what do you look for, do you accent the positive? Sure there's common sense but can people give us their knowledge and opinions about report cards? (20C1) In the course at [Faculty of Education] we were given all these questions to ask about evaluating but he didn't give us any concrete things about how we should write a report card, and how detailed it should be. (48C4)

This quote describes the dilemma Rachel finds herself in during the first reporting session in November. As a student teacher, Rachel was encouraged to ask questions about evaluation. The philosophy of evaluation and its importance in education were discussed as relevant issues in a broad sense. Now, Rachel is feeling the need for the "how" and is discovering that coming away with the "why" in one's mind is not sufficient when faced with the reality of having to evaluate and describe a child's progress.

Rachel's initial concerns are of a practical and specific nature. She is seeking survival techniques, much as anyone would in a new environment. Yet the environment is familiar in some ways. She has been a student in a classroom for many years, and has functioned as a

student-teacher in her teacher education experiences. She has had opportunities to think about and discuss teaching and learning and has even acquired some materials and ideas to experiment with on her own. But none of the opportunities and experiences has fully prepared her for the nature of the work she now finds herself doing. To understand the multi-faceted nature of teaching, with its often frightening elements of responsibility and decision-making, is a difficult task. Past experiences in teaching do not seem to inform Rachel's present situation nor do they appear to address the more complex components of her work.

The disorientation and bewilderment that accompany this realization are reflected in Rachel's discussions about her teacher education experiences. She feels frustrated that the preparation for teaching seems so different from the reality of being a teacher. Mingled with this frustration are feelings of guilt. Now that she is operating independently of the Faculty of Education, there is a tremendous pressure to be personally responsible for knowing how to teach. As she starts to realize that the experience of teaching this year will act as a fund of personal knowledge for her to draw upon immediately and in the future, Rachel begins to shift her discussions to focus on her present situation rather than concentrating on the past of her pre-service experiences. The time spent in the teacher education program becomes less of a reference point as she accumulates successful experiences with the "nitty-gritty" aspects of teaching. Dissatisfactions or concerns that emerge can be framed against her accumulating experience, as Rachel becomes more confident in looking to her own definitions of practice for answers.

Early Reflections on Practice

The process of reflection-in-action as described by Schön (1983) in *The Reflective Practitioner* provides an account of how practitioners in general may reflect on and learn from

their practices. "Reflection-in-action, is central to the art through which practitioners sometimes cope with the troublesome 'divergent' situations of practice" (p. 62). Treating problems of practice as manageable dilemmas, the practitioner learns to "reframe" or see the puzzle in a new way. Experimenting and learning to see problems from different angles encourages practitioners to regard their practices as contexts for learning rather than a set of phenomena they are expected to master. For a beginning practitioner, this can be difficult. Feelings of inadequacy and inexperience may overwhelm the beginner, and many events of practice may seem puzzling or surprising. Early in her second month of teaching, Rachel reports that she is able to distance herself from and think critically about her experiences in the classroom.

> Until you really are with your own class, you don't really know. (5C2) I step back and I'm always looking at myself and wondering. (8C2) I'm more confident about reflecting on what I've done. I can look now at what the kids are doing and say, "No, I'm going to have to modify that," and I know how I'm going to modify it. (12C2) I'm getting to know the students better (13C2)

Rachel's "knowing" is changing; from feeling discouraged and anxious about "not-knowing," she becomes more aware that she is developing practical knowledge. When confronted by her principal on the subject of her own knowledge, Rachel has no doubts about its potential for growth.

> He [the principal] said, "I don't think you know what your expectations are!" Well, that comes with time -- I'm still trying to figure out where these kids are at! Then, I *will* know. (9C3)

By mid-November, the focus of Rachel's discussions begins to shift dramatically. As she continues to work with the puzzle of assessing her students, a new dilemma emerges as awareness of her students and the significance of her relationship to them grows. As she reflects upon this, Rachel's concerns centre around an important realization: her knowledge of practice is growing, but she now begins to feel the strong need for justifications for her actions. As Rachel discusses

her experiences, the shift from needing survival techniques to needing long-term rationales to explain her actions in the classroom is indicative of her progress toward a more complete understanding of herself as a teacher.

First Accounts of Reflection-in-Action

This section describes Rachel's earliest reports of experimentation with her actions in the classroom. As she learns to assess her growing fund of practical knowledge, she increases in her confidence of her experimentations.

Reflection involves experimentation, but it also involves puzzlement, discouragement and dissatisfaction with one's actions. Two examples illustrate Rachel's beginning attempts to make sense of her work: one experiment seems to have "worked," but an activity with mixed results wavers between success and failure in her eyes.

> The clapping thing -- I learned that from Stephen and I tried that this week. Just to get their attention, you clap, and they automatically want to join in. That works, I've found that works. (24C3) I'm trying to let them read, but the reading groups -- they're working some days and other days they're just falling flat. (19C3)

Rachel is told that she will be moving to a portable classroom after Christmas, and as the fall term ends, she starts to anticipate having a "real" classroom to teach in. At this time, Rachel is conscious of deliberately planning to implement certain teaching techniques that had become logistically impossible in the library. The knowledge that she is going to be shifting her base of operations to a more permanent environment prompts her to reflect on her present environment and to consider how she might change rules, routines, seating arrangements and other "nitty-gritty" details.

> I'll go home and think, "Who am I going to put with who in the seating arrangement?" And I'll think, "Where am I going to physically place my Math centre, my Extra centre, my Puzzle centre?" (1C4) I'll start all over again. As if I was going in the class in September, and briefly go over the rules that we made in the Library and show that they apply in the portable. (2C4)

The portable's significance heightens, and the following discussion reveals Rachel's strong desire for privacy and space, qualities she hopes will be realized once she gets a "real" classroom.

> It's [the portable] a haven. Represents a new start in a sense, represents organization to me, represents having my own space. A place to put all my stuff (20C4) This will be my opportunity in the portable to say, "This is the basket for this, this is the basket for that, this is where you put that away." Because now, there's no place to put anything away. (26C4)

The upcoming move encourages Rachel to assess her growing stock of methods and materials. Intuitive belief in certain "tools of the trade" is no longer satisfactory; now Rachel wants to examine her own knowledge and form her own opinions.

> I've been using puzzles and I'm just wondering if I shouldn't have, say, a separate Puzzle centre, and a separate Math centre. I used to have the puzzles at the Math centre. But I'm wondering, what if someone comes in and says, "Why are you using puzzles as an extra activity?" If I could validate it, I think I would, but I'm not sure, so I have to go home and think about why I do things the way I do. (1C4)

With three months of teaching behind her, Rachel displays a divergence in her thinking that parallels the variety of her experiences. She discusses her immediate situation with the same intensity apparent in discussions of her relationships with students *and* of her own store of practical knowledge. The marked increases in both the length and scope of Rachel's discussions indicate that growth and change are becoming increasingly part of her professional life and are responsible for many new directions of thought and action. As Rachel examines her practical knowledge she is able to forecast its use for next year. She can identify areas that have proved unexpected or difficult, but now has a reserve of experience to draw upon. As she assesses her experiences she begins to realize how she is able to act as a resource to herself and use her knowledge even in its developmental stages.

Early Dilemmas of Practice

In order to begin making sense of their practice, beginning practitioners first of all must practice. Unlike their more experienced counterparts, *all* events may be initially taken to be surprising or puzzling. Reframing of events may be frustrating and incomplete, with few successful exemplars in the repertoire to draw upon. As Rachel begins to examine her practice more closely, she discovers and articulates several key dilemmas that play a strong part in shaping the development of her practical knowledge. These dilemmas are presented here, with notes on the reflective process as it appears to contribute to that development.

Schön (1983) suggests that although the process of reflection-in-action seems common to various professions, the professions display important differences in the *constants* that various practitioners bring to their reflection-in-action:

> * the media, languages, and repertoires that practitioners use to describe reality and conduct experiments
>
> * the appreciative systems they bring to problem setting, to the evaluation of inquiry, and to reflective conversation
>
> * the overarching theories by which they make sense of phenomena
>
> * the role frames within which they set their tasks and through which they bound their institutional settings (p. 270).

The idea of "overarching theories" seems particularly relevant to this discussion of Rachel's early dilemmas of practice. "An overarching theory does not give a rule that can be applied to predict or control a particular event, but it supplies language from which to construct particular descriptions and themes from which to develop particular interpretations" (p. 273). In reflecting on certain dilemmas that are contributing to her growing experience and knowledge of practice, Rachel is interpreting the events of these dilemmas through the language of overarching theory.

This language was supplied to her through her teacher education experiences, but has yet to play a significant role in the day to day understanding of her work. As she gains experience against which she can frame problems, she reaches back for support in the constant of an overarching theory only dimly understood in previous encounters.

One early dilemma of practice is apparent in the concern Rachel feels with creating a learning environment that attends to the needs and abilities of her students yet permits her to effectively monitor their progress and, as she says, "know" them. When Rachel looks back on her shift away from "doing centres," she makes reference to the overarching theory that supports her belief in "child-centred" teaching. As she experiences difficulty with the methods that she feels promote child-centred learning, she tries to step back from her practice and examine the students themselves, taking her cue from their responses.

> Over the past few weeks, I haven't been doing centres. That's because I obviously have them more at my fingertips when they're not in centres. You hear all about it being a child-centred, rather than a teacher-centred education. And I'm totally for that, and I hope that's the way I run my classroom. I want them to be responsible, to think on their own, but at the same time -- I don't think it's a contradiction -- I want to be able to feel I know where they're at. Right now I'm learning what a Grade 2 -- how they think. (12C4)

Unable to reframe this particular problem against a previous experience or successful exemplar, Rachel is forced to come to a decision as to how to best meet or address the concern. She knows that this decision will not be a permanent solution, and that the reflective process will continue.

> Right now, the only way I can monitor them is to have them all write at the same time and see what they do and share with them at the same time. Because, the other way, I found I was jumping all over from place to place. And they weren't finishing their work. (12C4)

Even though Rachel may feel that the experience of experimenting with learning centres is not successful, viewed through her reflections it becomes apparent that much learning is taking place, and that this dilemma *is* adding to her developing practical knowledge. She now understands that

it is important to become knowledgeable about one's students, that it may take a beginning teacher some length of time to become accustomed to identifying abilities and needs, and that for her it is important to feel a commitment to a theory of education she can believe in, even if her methodology is changing and not always consistent with the theory.

A second dilemma that surfaces in Rachel's reflections involves her struggle to encourage her students to become independent thinkers and problem-solvers. The overarching theory that supports this notion is a combination of learned theory from teacher education courses and a self-developed theory or recognition of "bad fit" as observed in practicum experiences as a student-teacher. Schön attributes to Vickers the point that not only artistic judgments but also practical judgments in general are based on an intuitive sense that cannot be fully articulated. "We can recognize and describe deviations from a norm very much more clearly than we can describe the norm itself" (Vickers, 1978, cited in Schön, 1983, p. 53). Rachel has expressed the idea that children should learn to operate in an independent fashion, a position based on her student-teaching observations of children working in an environment that did not encourage independent thinking and learning. By observing classrooms that deviated from the norm that Rachel thinks is most desirable, she is beginning to build toward a situation that she considers closer to the norm, or a better way of operating. As she experiments with the amount of assistance she is providing her students, she is developing practical knowledge about organizing a spelling program in particular, and about building personal theory in general.

> I didn't like the idea of them always putting up their hand and relying on me for the spelling words. I like them always to sound it out, but then I wanted a balance between them just writing and never knowing how to spell it correctly. I get scared about when you're revising their work with them how much should you check and how much shouldn't you check. So I wanted them to have the freedom. I didn't want them to feel that they were being cheated by letting them get away with incorrect spelling words and me not correcting them. But I wanted to do it in a fair way. So I found that if they took the responsibility and they sounded it out on their own, a

> lot of them could get words that way. And they could rely on themselves instead of always relying on me. And if that didn't work, then go to their word book, and if that didn't work, go to the dictionary. And they like using dictionaries. (15C4)

This dilemma appears to take a different direction from the previous one. Rachel reframes the problem against immediate experience and directly experiments with it. She uses a variety of methods, and encourages the children to do the same. When asked if she can see results, she is encouraged to note that the problem seems to be moving in a positive direction. Again, she realizes that there are usually no hard and fast solutions to problems of practice, but she has gained practical knowledge from her experimentation and her reflections make the gain visible.

> It's working O.K. I haven't had time to monitor to see if the spelling is improving. But I've noticed that kids are becoming more conscious of their spelling. They are writing -- some kids are now writing two or three pages! (16C4)

The dilemmas presented here are not singular events of practice, but are ongoing puzzles that shape Rachel's experiences and guide the development of her practical knowledge. This chapter has presented them in their early forms, and has shown Rachel's early reflections on her actions as she experiments with her knowledge of practice. An example of reflection-on-action with a subsequent knowledge gain is found in the next selection of data. Here, Rachel has just finished teaching a lesson on mammals for which she brought in various pelts of fur for the children to examine. It is exciting to watch the reflective process at work, as it becomes clear that Rachel is furthering her practical knowledge in a situation that she is not particularly satisfied with.

> *What bothered you about the lesson?* I think I'm just tired, and I just was all keyed up because I knew these furs would be exciting to touch. and it bothered me because, first of all I've got them in a circle and I didn't know whether to hold the fur up -- or get their attention and at the same time let them feel it. Because they all went nuts when I let them feel it. So I stood up and I thought that I would take the fur around and let each one of them feel it. And then all the rest of them started fussing. So I said, "Forget it, go back to your desks!" And about seven or eight of them said, "Now look what we've done, we've really wrecked it!" I said, "Put your heads down on your

> desks and think about why we're back here now, instead of in a circle." And then I just handed out things individually but, even at that, I didn't feel very good about it. *Why?* I don't mind the noise level, and I don't mind them talking. But, you know, I said, "You can try them on." So they all tried them on but they got carried away with the trying on aspect instead of focussing on the purpose I had the furs there for. But, maybe for me, my focus wasn't focussed enough. I should have talked about long hair, short hair, and maybe I should have done a bit more. *What was your purpose?* I wanted them to experience touching them, and we've been talking about mammals from the woods. I wanted them to associate the different furs, but I think I should have done some pre-work first. (31/32/33C4)

As Rachel reflects on her actions, she learns to distance herself from the lesson and examine ways in which she could have changed the direction of her interactions with her students. Through her reflections, it is possible to see into her work more clearly, and get an immediate sense of the kind of thinking that was going on as she taught. Even though there is not always immediate satisfaction or direct acknowledgement of a knowledge gain in many of these examples, Rachel is accumulating a repertoire of situations and events that will translate into experiential knowledge of practice as time goes on. There are indications that what is being learned is of an intangible nature, hard to describe, but nonetheless, very significant. The next selection of data shows how Rachel can apply some of this knowledge to her practice, and learn from the results. Her ability to predict its use in future situations indicates that the practical knowledge she is gaining has versatility and applicability: not only can it be applied to immediate practice, but its value and usefulness can be forecasted.

> I mean -- I often think to myself, wait 'til next year! wait 'til next year, I'll be organized! Wait 'til next year! Meaning that in the summer I'll do this, this, and this. I'll know what the curriculum is, I'll know what things I have to collect, guidelines I have to be thinking about. I'll know what to expect as far as Christmas concerts, I'll know what to expect for parents night. (48C4)

Rachel has moved beyond the position of "not-knowing," a vulnerable situation in which even survival techniques were unknown. She now has the "armour" of experience to protect her from that situation, and any dissatisfactions she now feels with her knowledge have an experiential

reference. As Rachel discusses the kind of knowledge she is learning and continuing to search for, it is exciting to note this shift: from wanting and needing the "how" of her actions, we are able to visibly track her discovery of the need for the "why." As the search for validation continues, it is clear that a major change in Rachel's view of herself and her professional world is taking place.

> Something I've been thinking about for the past few weeks. I feel that I'm not -- my professional knowledge is not good. *Why do you feel that?* Because, I mean I'm just learning to cope in the classroom. I'm learning to establish a routine, establish a trust. And all those types of things. And I haven't -- my time is not free -- when it is free I certainly don't want to pick up a book on "How to Teach -- How Children Learn to Spell." Maybe I'm not being as professional as I could be. But I think in a couple of years once I get myself feeling that way maybe then I'll pick up some books on the theory of "Why." You see it shouldn't be that way, I should have all that theory and than be able to apply it. Certainly I know about inventive spelling and I know about things that I learned from the "Reading for the Love of it" conference, and things that I learned from P.A. days. And a few minor things from [Faculty of Education] and the trend in education. But I don't really know the meaty things that I feel that I should know. (51C4)

The continuous search for "why" has only begun for Rachel. Rachel may feel dissatisfied with herself at this juncture, but the dissatisfaction is of quite a different nature than her feelings of discontent and anxiety three months earlier. Now she knows there is work to be done, and she knows that she has the ability and the tools to approach the task.

Chapter 4

DEVELOPING PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE: Finishing the First Year

Redefining the Dilemmas

This chapter will deal with further dilemmas and concerns that form an important part of Rachel's experiences and that serve as examples in the continuing story of her development of practical knowledge. Each area of interest contributes to the ongoing development of Rachel's professional growth. The data from the six interviews held in the winter and spring terms reveal three major concerns: understanding and learning from the students, searching for the balance between traditional and modern, and developing a personal philosophy of teaching. All of these interviews were held out of the school, following a period of time (either a full or half day) spent as Rachel's assistant in the classroom. The reasons underlying these changes in the research strategy are discussed fully in Chapter 5. It is significant to this chapter that I have now gained a more complete understanding of the workings of Rachel's classroom by actively participating in the activities she and her students engage in, and that our discussions now encompass a broader range of topics due to my deeper knowledge of Rachel's class and due to the extended time we now have for our interviews since they are conducted out of school in a more relaxing atmosphere.

Understanding and Learning from the Students

As the winter term begins, Rachel and her students are situated in a portable classroom located behind the school. The initial concerns Rachel had with the learning environment have

now been addressed. The portable is very different from the library as a teaching and learning space, and it takes Rachel and the children a few weeks to become accustomed to having their own room. Once this novelty has somewhat worn off, both Rachel and the students begin to concentrate on the tasks at hand. For Rachel, the chief concern is now her students. Her worries about "nitty-gritty" essentials and details have lessened; her concerns with her own fund of knowledge remain, but are now combined with questions such as, "How can I best understand the learning that is taking place in my class?" and "Do I know enough to justify my actions and decisions?" Rachel is now caught up in the present manifestations of a previous concern: "Where do I get the knowledge to know how to evaluate?" From "not-knowing" how to evaluate, Rachel has moved to wanting to know *why* she evaluates particular students in certain ways.

> This [upcoming] checklist is going to be totally different. They've unlearned all the things that I thought they had learned! (32C5) I know my kids so much better than when I wrote those first report cards. And I'm so scared about these [upcoming] report cards, because my ideas about these kids have changed so much that it's like I'm totally contradicting myself from the first report card. (18CNG)

The experience of learning to assess, diagnose and prescribe is proving to be difficult. Rachel's previous experiences as a student teacher have not prepared her for the task of finding out what a child has learned and how well he or she has learned it. Compounding this dilemma is the realization that evaluation may very well end in deciding that a child has failed to achieve grade level.

> I have about eight kids that should not pass this year and I feel guilty because I think, "Maybe that's my fault." Then I look at them and I only have my top kids to compare to my low kids. Not to another Grade 2 class. So I go through that, wondering if my kids are at the right level for a Grade 2 level. (17CNG) But then it comes -- if you're going to fail a kid, that really shakes me. Jennifer for example. It's not just, "You failed a test." This is a year of her life. She is going to be a year behind her peers for the rest of her life. And you think, "Oh, my goodness. I've done this to the child." You can't take it home with you, but -- it's really hard. And when you've got eight of them who might fail. I worry about if the parents got together

> and said, "Miss Linden's class had eight kids fail. Is this because she's a new teacher or because she's got problems?" (32C7)

As Rachel reflects upon this difficult situation, she appears to be revisiting earlier feelings of inadequacy and frustration that were evident when she discussed her professional knowledge. Rachel argues that the professional knowledge now demanded in the real-life situation she is faced with is not at her disposal, nor were the practical dimensions of evaluation made explicit in her teacher education experience in general. She is trying to gain perspective on the situation, and making justifications for her limited knowledge and expertise. This shift in thinking exemplifies reflection-in-action's main characteristic: one must continually draw upon past experiences and thoughts in order to reach a fresh perspective on problematic situations. The non-linear approach Rachel appears to be taking as she discusses evaluation, is preparing her to draw upon her own experiential knowledge of her students in order to make sense of this dilemma.

> We weren't looking for [instructor] to say, "When you get to report cards here's what you should do." But even hints -- things like your principal says now like, "Be positive. Work on putting things positively." It's common sense that you should do that, but it just doesn't come naturally. (2CNG) It [the Philosophy of Grading and Evaluation course] seemed to always say, "Well, it's so interesting. Everything is so very subjective when you're evaluating." And we'd take this test, and everybody would score differently on it and then he'd say, "Oh! Look at this! Everybody's scoring differently!" Well, so? (22C9) So, what do you do? And he'd discuss studies that had been done and comment that evaluation was so subjective, but -- we never got around to the rest. (23C9) *So this is a real situation that demands real answers?* It's major. For example, if I fail Jennifer, that's a year of her life that's changed. Can I do that to a child? With my "professional knowledge" and understanding? Can I do that to her and three other kids in my class? (24C9)

As Rachel questions her own knowledge of evaluation, she prepares to make a decision in a situation that is, she feels, vulnerable to experimentation. A spelling program may be more resilient to change than assessment and failure of a child in one's class. Rachel is learning that she must draw on her own reserves of common sense and personal experiential knowledge as she

makes decisions concerning her students, but in the search for justification, she questions both the logic and the autonomous nature of her decision-making.

> The first-year teacher who's teaching Grade 1 -- he and I were talking and he said to me, "Rachel, you seem to be taking this all on your own shoulders!" And I said, "Well, Paul, where do I get the support from?" And he didn't answer me. But where do I get it? I can go bang down [principal's] door -- maybe that's what I should have done! Then, if he comes in and my confidence -- maybe I'm just scared about what he [principal] might say about what I'm doing. I just don't like to approach him because I don't find him a very approachable person. And if I go to the Vice-Principal, he'll just throw all these suggestions at me just to look good. And it's not a genuine concern about a first-year teacher going through an educational dilemma! (28C9) *So you feel that you're learning how to evaluate -- learning from these kids this year?* But would it have made any difference if I had had all the experience and knowledge in the world? What I want to know is if Jennifer had been in somebody else's class, would they have failed her? (25C9)

The search for collegial support of one's knowledge is likely common to most professionals. It is not surprising to see a teacher in her first year of practice turning to other more experienced teachers for advice and support, and when the support is not forthcoming, beginning to make assessments and decisions based upon her own knowledge of the situation. Now, Rachel is experiencing the difficulty of learning to accept the limitations of her knowledge and the need for experimentation. Many of the situations she is now encountering, such as the evaluation of students, are unique and not usually dealt with in the teacher education experience. As she wavers on the brink of experimentation, she expresses her fears of her more experienced colleagues: they offer no support during this time of self-doubt, yet Rachel views them as her judges once her decisions are made.

> And my fear is, "What are the Grade 3 teachers going to say when my kids get up there?" Which is terrible! Despite the fact that each child is an individual -- not all the time is it a reflection on the teacher whether a kid learns or not. (15C9) Even the Kindergarten teacher who had four of them last year [when she taught Grade 1] said, "Oh, I knew they were going to fail." She feels guilty now. They barely scraped through Grade 1 and she says, "I knew they were going to fail sometime in the Primary years." So she didn't have to make the decisions -- she left it to me! (32C9)

As Rachel moves through this particular development, visible growth and changes are occurring. From feeling frustrated with a perceived lack of knowledge that she believes would support her evaluative judgements, Rachel is turning to her colleagues for advice and support. When she discovers that her colleagues can appear more threatening than supportive, she turns at last, to her own feelings and beliefs about judging learning and discovers that these will likely prove to be the most valid guide for making personally and professionally satisfying evaluative decisions.

> I figure they learn anyway. No matter what. Like when I get all uptight, Mom says, "Oh, Rachel they're learning something even if you just sit there and read to them all day. They're going to be taking in something -- they're learning." That takes my guilt away. They might not know as much as the other Grade 2's but -- (17CNG) Kids learn despite the fact -- whether you're teaching them. Unless you're a total wipe-out as a first year teacher. I've said to you before that I sometimes think my kids are guinea pigs. But, sometimes I think, "Well, because it's my first year, and I'm so keen -- probably they're getting more from me than they're getting from someone who's been teaching 20 years and doesn't care to change anything." So, they might fill the kids' heads with the curriculum better than I do, but -- *Is that important?* No. (15C7)

Traditional Versus Modern -- Searching for the Balance

As Rachel gains further understanding of her students, she begins to examine her methods and teaching strategies. She explains that the Teacher Education courses provided her with a "generic" set of values and philosophies that she feels should act as guides through the maze of methodology, but various obstacles in the path prevent her from directly applying most of what she thought she had learned at the Faculty of Education. Again, if we think of Schön's overarching theories, we can see the possibilities of these as constants in the ever-changing, experimental framework of Rachel's developing practical knowledge.

> All I basically got from [Faculty of Education] if I can narrow it down, was the emphasis on not being traditional but being more individual, getting at the child's individual needs. Hands-on materials. [Faculty of Education] taught me a kind of an overall philosophy of what was bad and what was good and what you should be steering towards. But it didn't give me any meaty stuff to take away and chew on, it just kind of left me there. (6C7)

One of the first obstacles that presents itself in Rachel's path is the school she is assigned to in mid-September. The principal of Clarendon Road makes it abundantly clear to Rachel that she is to follow the approved methods of teaching that are in place at his school. His comments are less than encouraging to Rachel's self-confidence and place her firmly in the realm of the inexperienced, "not-knowing" novice.

> Even when I got here to Clarendon Road, the principal said to me, "Well, you can forget all the theory you learned at [Faculty of Education.] Now you're in the real world. You students all come out with all this theory and ideas and how much are you going to put into practice? You've never been out here and you don't know what it's going to be like." (9C7)

Rachel is finding it difficult to blend the knowledge she gained from the courses she took at the Faculty of Education with the reality of the program she is expected to offer as a teacher at Clarendon Road Public School. On the one hand, the teacher education courses emphasized to Rachel that children learn as individuals and that "systems" for teaching reading such as the 3-group approach, or "round-robin" reading, are stressful and ultimately unsuccessful for children. Yet at Clarendon Road, these are approved methods for teaching reading in the Primary grades and Rachel is finding it important to look for a balance between what she labels "traditional" and "modern" approaches.

> I feel there is such a friction between the traditional way of doing things and the modern way. And I think there's a balance between the two. (22C5) I mean, you come in at 9:00 a.m., you open your Math book and you do Math from 9:00 until 9:30. From 9:30 until 10:30 you do Spelling -- and so on. And yes, that's the way the principal here likes it. You do Phonics with them, you have three reading groups. I was frustrated because my principal had this idea of the three reading groups and the 9-grid patterning and I'd never heard of it. I vaguely recall when I went to public school being divided into three reading groups. And you're told at [Faculty of Education] that you should never do round-robin reading. And how are you supposed to get your kids to listen if you have these three reading groups? So putting those two things together just doesn't jive. (7CNG)

The next confrontation Rachel has with "traditional" teaching occurs when she receives criticism from her fellow-teachers concerning her approaches. They feel she is too inexperienced to attempt individualized instruction through learning centres and Rachel gets the feeling that child-centred learning is not an integral part of Clarendon Road's philosophy of learning. Here, the conflict becomes more personal when Rachel feels it is infringing upon her supporting theory or constant that child-centred education is to be desired over a teacher-centred program.

> The other teachers said to me, "How can you be doing centres in your first year? There's no way you can be doing it." And I thought, "Well, fine. That was the only thing I was taught to do at [Faculty of Education.] You people were taught to have them sitting in rows. You're supposed to be trying to get out of that." (30C7) There are centres at this school, because the Board pushes them, but there is also the message here that is saying, "I [principal] won't come down on you if you don't use centres if you don't feel comfortable with them." (23C5)

As she strives to provide learning experiences for her students that address their needs and individual potential, Rachel learns that her choice of method may be undesirable in a more important way than those discussed above; an approach such as a learning centre may not be suitable for the particular needs and abilities of her students this year. When discussing this new development, Rachel maintains that her original belief in centres has not been shaken, but only temporarily displaced. She struggles to negotiate "modern" teaching approaches in the overwhelming presence of existing "traditional" programs, and becomes even more discouraged when the students in her class achieve greater success with the more traditional approaches. The search for viable ways to implement centres in spite of collegial pressure ends when she finds the needs of her students even more compelling.

> I'm just realizing, at first I was all gung-ho about getting all this centre stuff set up. And I'm for centres. I really am, but with these kids, I've found it's too hard. Here I am with reading groups, and I wanted all my Language Arts fitted in between 9:10 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. So the last two weeks, I've decided, "Forget it." And I'm devoting my whole morning to Language Arts. Until lunch-time. Then I don't feel like I'm pressuring. In the afternoon, they do Math. If it takes until afternoon recess,

> then that's O.K. As far as doing group activities and then centres, it's hard on me because I don't feel comfortable. I don't feel the kids are getting the skills they need. I'm for centres, and I don't like to see people knock them. But I agree that you need to do the skills, and get the skills done, and then have centres. (4C5) But it's funny, because I do round-robin reading with my kids and they're so eager -- they all say, "Can I read, can I read?" And I keep thinking, "If this is so wrong, why are these kids so excited about reading?" (9CNG)

As she discusses the difficulties of joining the philosophic values and beliefs she assimilated from her teacher education experiences to the specific reality of her class, Rachel demonstrates the reflective sort of concern that strengthens her development as a caring and thinking practitioner. The dilemma of how to achieve philosophical and methodological harmony is complex, and Rachel is only beginning to resolve it to her satisfaction. However, Rachel's reflections reveal a greater understanding of the dilemma, and promise fresh approaches and new strategies. Her ongoing curiosity and concern will keep the problem alive and positive, rather than allowing it to overwhelm and defeat her.

Reluctant to give up the idea of centres entirely, Rachel experiments with one measurement centre. Here she explains that while the centre is popular and interesting for the students, she discovers that she is not comfortable with the approach because it is noisy and disruptive to students not engaged at the centre.

> I have this one little centre set up in the corner of the room -- I have to let 22 kids go through the centre and do one thing. And you know my kids -- could they go, not being used to a total centre environment, quietly in the middle of a reading session, go over and look at the balance scale, play around with the weights, record it and then quietly come back? Without harassing the rest of the class, drawing attention to themselves or not knowing what to do when they got there? Because it would take a period of three to four days to get everybody through a centre. Or do you sit there while they're all around you and let one of them pick it up or measure, and let nobody else have that experience? Or do you just not do it? (13C9)

Questions are the sign of reflective practice. When practitioners begin to reflect in action, to question their actions and choose new approaches to a problem of practice, they become

researchers in the context of their own work. Rachel's questions only serve to further her development of knowledge. As she wonders aloud how best to implement this learning strategy, she speaks rhetorically, for the best answers will come from her own experience and reflection. The preceding passage of data tells a compelling story: Rachel displays much knowledge about her students, yet also seems aware of the potential risks that experimentation involves. While she may not come to a firm decision or conclusion here, she demonstrates that reflection-in-action is a constructive enterprise that fosters change, experimentation and more thoughtful practice.

Toward Developing a Personal Philosophy

Sharing Professional Knowledge: the pre-service experience

In the pre-service experience, professional knowledge is usually shared on a theoretical level; the practical dimension of professional knowledge may only be present in student-teaching experiences. Rachel expresses frustration with her perceived lack of professional knowledge, and gradually learns to depend more and more upon her own growing store of knowledge. She feels a general dissatisfaction with the pre-service experience in that she feels it could have been an opportunity for her to have gathered professional knowledge to use in the practical experience of the classroom, and yet she knows that much professional knowledge is only relevant in an experiential context. She argues that student-teachers often have to rely upon their powers of observation and selection. Sharing professional knowledge seems impossible in most practice teaching situations; experience is paramount and professional knowledge seems to be absorbed, if at all, by some sort of osmosis.

> It's not that the professors at [Faculty of Education] on the whole taught us incorrectly. I think it was just the way it was put across. It could have been put across in a lot more organized, practical fashion. [Instructor] had good ideas and all the up-to-date information, and the theory but -- I guess we didn't have the experience

> to fall back on. Now, if I was listening to him I could say, "Yes, that is good." Or maybe, I'd take it in better. (10 and 11CNG) I was at [the Faculty of Education] and in classrooms watching and observing. But unless you have a model teacher, then you're not going to get all the things you should be getting. (4C2)

In-service Sharing of Professional Knowledge

Professional knowledge that is shared in the in-service context makes more of an impact on Rachel. She realizes how important one's experience becomes when assessing and selecting professional advice and ideas, and admits that this would probably not have been possible in the pre-service years. The difference that practical application makes is tremendous; Rachel gets excited about ideas that she knows she will be able to try in her classroom instead of having to only sit and absorb, waiting for the chance to implement. As Rachel discusses the various in-service experiences she has had, it is important to note her use of the word "know." She predicts that next year she will "know enough" to implement the writing process in a certain way. She now "knows that" it is important to select ideas from in-service speakers, not just accept; she "knows that" it is important for students to learn to write. All her usages of the word "know" suggest "knowing that" rather than "knowing why."

> Last night I went to a thing on reading and it was really interesting because I was sitting there listening to her [speaker] and I was thinking, "Am I doing this?" [editing with the children in the writing process.] And I thought, "Well, I am doing what she's doing, but not exactly the way she would do it and next year I would do it like she's doing it." But, this year, I say to them, "O.K. now, this is boring stuff! Tell me what you feel! What happened?" So I am doing it, but not in as refined a way as I would like and, next year, when I start the writing folder, I will know enough to talk about throwing the vocabulary out in the first draft, editing, all that stuff. Next year I'll know. But this year I am doing it in my own modified way. (1C6) I've been to enough conferences to get little tidbits that I remember each time. I know that the writing folder is important, I know that they've got to write a lot. I know that, I was taught -- I was told that. (1C6) I'd really like to go to "Reading for the Love of It" for example, for a few days, and just soak in everything they have to say. And then come back here -- and I'm sure there are going to be things that I'm not going to agree with in "Reading for the Love of It" but I know that now I don't have to sit there blindly and say, "Yeah, yeah, yeah." (25C5) I think that now that when I pick up a book I can see, "Oh, yeah!" For example, in inventive spelling -- when the lady

> talked last week about inventive spelling and how kids learn, I could finally say, "Yes, that makes sense! It's realistic!" I can apply that to my classroom, yes it is important that kids know how to write, it is important that they know the emphasis on certain things, it is important to do such-and-such. Whereas before [in B.Ed. year] I might have said, "Sure, yeah." (7C7 and 8C7)

It is in her reflections on her own beliefs about learning that Rachel reveals a beginning development in the area of "knowing why."

> The more experience I have, the more I want to gain at conferences like "Reading for the Love of it" so I can kind of attune my experience to a theory. It's neat when you hear a speaker talking and you can totally relate to them. Because you're doing something like what they're saying or you're saying, "Yes, I knew there was a reason why I was doing this, but I wasn't quite sure and so thank you for backing me up on it." (13CNG) [Speaker at conference] said, "My pet peeve is Language, so that's what we'll do and we'll do Math next month." And we all laughed, but it's true! That's what you do! And you feel akin to that. That's sort of what I mean by theory. (15CNG)

Rachel finds that sharing professional knowledge can have two dimensions: one, it can mean sharing a kind of knowledge that will lead to greater confidence in making professional decisions and two, it can lead to reinforcement of one's own definition of practice and its meaning.

Collegial Sharing of Professional Knowledge

Collegial sharing of professional knowledge is not a formal occurrence in most schools. A new teacher may have difficulty extracting information from his or her more experienced colleagues and may often have to initiate any encounters concerned with professional matters. Rachel discovers that her colleagues are seldom, if ever, interested in discussing their work and she is both surprised and discouraged by this discovery. One of the most puzzling aspects of this is the fact that other beginning teachers on the staff are among the most reluctant to share problems or possible solutions; Rachel feels inadequate and uneasy when in conversation with them. As Rachel expresses her frustration with attempts to initiate discussions with fellow

beginning teachers, she begins to realize that non-reflectiveness can fall anywhere on the continuum of experience.

> Janice is in her second year. And she teaches Grade 1. I said to her the other day, "I have a friend who works at [school] and her program is so individualized. If my program was individualized like hers, I wouldn't have to face this dilemma of kids failing. There has to be a balance between an individualized program and the program we offer here." And she said, "Oh, I don't care. I've got enough things to worry about." As if to say, "Oh, don't bother me, I've got too many things to worry about without thinking about what kind of program I'm offering." She wasn't being rude, she was just saying, "Oh, I don't have time to think about that." And I thought, "I wish Charlotte could be here in this room!" Because here we sit and talk at great lengths for hours -- discussing and reflecting on why something is the way it is and this teacher just seemed so calm and so -- she knows why she does things! For her, everything is just so -- there. (30C9)

This could have been an extremely intimidating experience for Rachel. To think that a fellow beginning teacher should have all the answers, or not care to admit that there are problems with programs in schools, could have frightened Rachel into non-reflectiveness. Instead, she is keenly aware that in order to continue to learn why she does things the way she does she must continue to question and reflect. Fortunately, she realizes that this teacher and the others like her whom Rachel encounters on her staff, are operating in a vacuum-like existence and may well become habituated, static practitioners. Yet the frustration with these people remains. Rachel is eager to share her new-found store of "knowing why" and wonders that no-one cares to share their knowledge with her. Eager to share and discuss her work, she is labelled "keen" and gently laughed at by her more experienced colleagues. This is a typical situation, but does not daunt Rachel as she continues to ask questions; knowing now that she will most likely have to ask them of herself.

> She [Janice] does think, but we're never like two teachers professionally discussing things. Nobody there ever discusses with me *how* they do things, what's behind what they do. (20C10) Paul is a first-year teacher and I said to him, "You seem so calm and cool. Do you never wonder why, or if what you're doing is right? Don't you ever get frustrated?" And he said, "Yeah, I do. But I figure, it's not worth getting all

> worked up about, so I don't." (20C10) Margaret [in her 3rd year] does discuss things with me, to the degree that she might say, "This is what I learned in Teachers' College. This is how I do it, and this is the way I think it should be done." But nobody ever says, "I wonder *why* I do it this way?"

It is exciting to watch the reflective process at work as we see Rachel's personal philosophies of teaching and learning begin to emerge. It is also important to note how Rachel makes use of all possible information sources: pre-service experiences, in-service opportunities and collegial encounters. After sifting through the advice, ideas and general knowledge gathered in each of these areas, Rachel begins to build her own set of beliefs based on her personal e periences and enriched with knowledge gained from others' perspectives.

Reworking the Dilemmas of Practice

> How are practitioners to learn wisdom except by reflection on practice dilemmas that call for it? (Schön, 1987, p. xiii)

The next section contains examples of ongoing puzzles that Rachel identified as dilemmas earlier in the year. These are areas that have been subjects of reflection and experiment, changes and concerns. Rachel's increasing practical knowledge has aided in her thinking about these situations, and is helping her to move toward new approaches and ideas.

Taking Responsibility for Learning

The first dilemma involves Rachel's belief that learning should be an experiment involving risk-taking, independence, and critical thinking. Here Rachel discusses how the responsibility for learning should be shared between students and teachers; not always an equal division of responsibilities, but with each party taking some control of the learning. This concern is a more mature version of Rachel's earlier discussion of learning to foster independence of thought and action in her students as she experimented with the spelling program.

> I love seeing kids take geo-boards, which is a new activity for them, and experiment. That, to me, I'm not even sure what it does, but I'm sure it must have some good effect. I don't know, it's just that they are using their imaginations, they're critically thinking. They're not just taking my word for it, they're seeing things on their own. (31C5) And that's what these kids need to learn is independence. That's why you have all the glue out and the staples and the stapler out and the paper there so they know that they can do it without coming to me to ask for every little thing. When they're operating on their own, I feel good. (36C5) And you keep thinking -- you hear these people say, "You should never demand -- every kid can't write all the time." But then, when do they know what you expect of them? I don't know if you heard me say to Jason, "Jason, that's a boring story." How else do you get it across to them? They write, "I did this. I did that. I did this." And he looked at me. And I said, "Jason, I cannot even read that!" And he looked at it and he said, "You know, I can't read it either!" And I said, "Well, if you can't read it, how do you expect me to read it?" And so he knows. (48/49C9)

The Meaning of Learning

The next puzzle that resurfaces in Rachel's reflections is the notion that the teacher must set certain expectations for him or herself. For Rachel, these expectations are: learning should have relevance and meaning to the students, and the teacher should be able to assess individual needs and abilites and provide appropriate learning experiences and environments to meet these. As she discusses these ideas, she uses the example of her first experiment with individualized spelling, and how she has used an experimental situation to learn more about meeting the needs of her students.

> We have individualized spelling now, and every child has to learn 10 words. Now, that might be too many. I'm just learning that. (9C5) For example, Christopher chose "hippopotamus." And maybe I should have stressed to him that it's too hard a word. He's still getting it wrong. But he wants it on his list, so if he wants to learn how to spell "hippopotamus," let him learn. He's still getting the sounding-out of it. (10C5)

After two more months of individualized spelling, Rachel is able to reflect upon its impact on the students and to discuss how she will modify it in the months to come. Even though she doesn't feel totally confident with her assessment of her students' learning, it is possible to see that she has learned from this experiment, and her fund of practical knowledge has increased as a result.

> They love going to the blackboard and writing their words, playing hangman with a friend, making words out of plasticine and painting them, acting them out -- they love it. And I think that's a bonus because they're liking to use words and manipulate them. I wonder now, if you took a poll of all the words -- are they actually improving? I don't know. The ones that have always known how to spell are becoming better, but those ones who were always low, they're maybe getting more confident and enjoying it, which is good perhaps, but I don't really know if they're learning how to spell the words. I hope they are. Through repetition -- how else do you do it? (20C7) I'm conscious of the time aspect of the spelling. It takes all Monday morning -- but they [students] love spelling. (20C7) I'll probably do similar spelling things next year, but modify it in some ways. (23C7)

Rachel's belief that learning should have meaning is reinforced by her own experiences as a student. She is concerned that her students know the relevance of the tasks they perform in the classroom, and she feels great responsibility to motivate through meaning. It is clear that Rachel's belief in the relevance of learning is grounded in her own thoughts on the meaning of education. Applying her present situation to the constant framework that holds these thoughts together is what makes her work exciting this year. Questioning and thinking are important parts of the reflective process that will serve to help Rachel function as a practitioner who is in tune with herself.

> When I plan a lesson or when I think about it -- I'll think, "O.K. I've got to get these things across to these kids -- why we're learning them." I hated it in school when I had to go through things -- like "relations" in Physics. And I was thinking, "I'll probably never use this stuff again." I remember asking my teachers "Why am I learning all this? I hate it and I don't like it and I'm never going to use it." And I told the kids -- I said, "O.K. I want you to know why we are learning to measure." And I felt really good that I'd got it across that they're not learning this because I'm telling them -- they're learning it because it is important and they have to know it and it's something that they will use. And that's the way I think everything should be. *Have a meaning to it?* Yes. (40C7) You've got to use your common sense. That plays a big part. I question all the time, "Why am I doing this? Is this important?" I give them a list of spelling words -- so why should they know how to spell "beaver?" I do the months of the year, the days of the week, the common words like "where" or if I find a word that they're continually not spelling right, like "girl," I'll put that on the spelling list. So you learn. I don't think anyone ever told me that this is how you're going to do a spelling program. I guess it's just common sense and it's innate. Unless you use a speller and it's got all those things set up for you anyway and you don't have to think about it. (19C7)

The Role of Reflection

Rachel's reflections have revealed what learning means to her, and what she feels her role is in the process of learning. As she expresses these thoughts, it is possible to note the development of a personal understanding of professional knowledge. Moving from the "absorption-only" state of pre-service, to the "attend and select" process of in-service, and the struggle with collegial sharing, Rachel moves further in the quest for a deeper knowledge. As the year draws to a close, Rachel shares her growing self-confidence and increased trust in her own knowledge.

> I don't agree with everything that everybody says. You develop your own -- I think I'm developing my own way of doing things. I'm finding what's comfortable for me and I don't look at other teachers so much and think, "Oh, they've done this and maybe I should be doing that." I'm beginning to be more comfortable thinking, "This is the way I like to teach, and I think I'm getting through to my kids, so leave me alone and let me do it." The other two Grade 2 teachers tend to be more traditional. They say to me, "You're doing centres in your first year? You're nuts!" And I'd think, "Oh, I heard about this at [Faculty of Education] that there would be people who would tell me this." And at first I thought, "Well, I can see what they mean!" And I've toned myself down because I think I was taking too many centre things on at once. I'm more comfortable with what I'm teaching now than I was. Next year, I'll be even more comfortable. (16CNG)

This provides such a contrast to Rachel's earlier fears and feelings of inadequacy where she says, "I don't know the meaty things that I feel that I should know." (52C4) Whether Rachel would define feeling more comfortable with her own practice as a "meaty" sort of thing is difficult to say; however it usually follows that stepping closer to understanding one's own actions and reasons for action, engenders a greater trust and satisfaction with oneself.

> [Next year] I think I'll be able to foresee more -- I'll have my materials and things all set up. I think I'll have more stuff around the room. Right now I think, "I can't do Measurement because I'm doing Counting now. So I can't combine the two. I'll do Counting and then I'll handle Measurement." Instead of having a thermometer in my classroom all year round and letting the kids see it all the time and having a Measurement centre all year round and changing the task cards -- right now I can only think of one thing at a time. *Do you think that will change?* I think it will, when

> I get more confident in what I'm teaching. (23/4C7) There are stages. You learn things in different stages. I can't wait until next year! I'm so glad that you get a whole different batch of kids every year. I'm so looking forward to starting all over again. (20CNG)

The journey in search of professional knowledge is seldom uneventful or straightforward for the truly curious. Because Rachel has demonstrated a caring inquiry into the relevance and meaning of her work, it appears that this is but the first of many important steps forward on the path toward a long and exciting exploration of herself as a teacher and learner.

Chapter 5

REFLECTIONS ON THE RESEARCH

The Relationship between Research and Practice

This chapter presents my reflections on the research and on my role as researcher. The data presented and discussed here are my personal reflections on the changing shape of my relationship to Rachel, the thinking that guided the changes, and our efforts to maintain and learn from dialectical interchange.

Traditionally, researchers have removed themselves from the practices that they studied. Understanding came from observation and deduction, rarely from active involvement in the phenomena that served as data for the study. Recently, however, the traditional relationship between research and practice has shown signs of change. Schön (1983) argues that, "when we reject the traditional view of professional knowledge, recognizing that practitioners may *become* reflective researchers in situations of uncertainty, instability, uniqueness, and conflict, we have recast the relationship between research and practice" (p. 308). To encourage researchers to think as practitioners do and practitioners to think as researchers do involves changing the perspective on research and practice.

Reflective research can enhance a practitioner's view of practice and encourage active involvement in solving dilemmas related to practice. Researchers who move into the practitioner's world and experience its reality are in a better position to further their understanding of research and to gain a new perspective on practice. Schön supports this claim

by arguing that, "reflective research requires a partnership of practitioner-researchers and researcher-practitioners" (p. 323). He goes on to suggest that this partnership may take on various forms. Practitioners may relate to each other and support the reflective research that emerges from such relationships. Reflective researchers may act as consultants to practitioners, or relate in a participant-observation way. Practitioners may become reflective researchers, moving from research to practice and back again in their careers. All of these models for relationships between practice and research suggest that a clearer view of each world will emerge with the active participation of both researcher and practitioner.

In the studies of teacher thinking that helped form the conceptualization for this study, reflection is shown to play a significant part. Elbaz (1983) devotes a chapter in her study to her reflections on the methodology that supported the work; Clandinin (1986) takes a reflective look back over the course of her research and discusses the educational possibilites she sees emerging from the study. Both of these studies point to the value of reflection as a way to further the researchers' understandings of the teachers they became involved with. Both works derived their methodologies from a belief in dialectical, reciprocal exchanges. The ways in which Elbaz and Clandinin were able to give accounts of teachers' practices followed from these relationships, and the researchers' reflections on the relationships appear to be important features of research that claims to interpret another's perspective. The implications for research of this kind, with specific references to Elbaz's and Clandinin's studies, are discussed in the final chapter of this study. It is significant to note here that both of these researchers were interested in their thoughts on the research process and the potential of reflection to deepen our understanding of teachers' practical knowledge.

Early Reflections

When I began this study, I knew that I was interested in observing and discussing the complexities of teaching with a first-year teacher. I anticipated, through these observations and discussions, being able to create a picture of a first-year teacher's triumphs and tribulations and an account of how her practical knowledge developed. Soon after our work began, I sensed that the relationship I already held with Rachel would be of great significance to our discussions and to the study in general. I felt empathy for Rachel, having once been a first-year teacher myself, but I knew the relationship would have to go beyond empathy if its full potential was to be explored.

After our first interview, I wrote field-notes to try to capture my specific feelings and general impressions of our discussion. I was dissatisfied with my role in the interview; I felt that I had no clear idea of how to draw Rachel into discussion about her work. I thought about my own first year as a teacher and tried to decide how much of my own experience would be valuable to Rachel. As I prepared for the second interview, I drew up an outline of ideas and topics for discussion that I felt had arisen out of the first interview. I wasn't sure if this would address the concern I had felt following the first interview, where I didn't think I had given Rachel a very clear idea of what we were about, but I was prepared to experiment with an "agenda" of sorts. I also decided to keep in mind my own experiences, and use them only if it seemed that Rachel needed some reinforcement and assurance that she was not alone in her struggles.

During the second interview I learned that Rachel had been observed by her principal and that she was upset with his comments. Her greeting to me was, "I almost called you last night, but I knew you'd be here today!" When I realized that Rachel needed to talk about this immediate concern rather than attend to the data from the last interview, I shelved my tentative

agenda and listened to her tell me about her evaluation. In making this decision, I was acknowledging that Rachel would determine what were her problems of practice. This was a conscious decision on my part, related to my belief that if the practitioner was not central in this research, the perspective developed would not necessarily be hers.

As we talked, I recounted several anecdotes from my first experiences of being evaluated; experiences that had seemed so degrading at the time. Rachel appeared to draw perspective and relief from the knowledge that she was not alone in her feelings. Many of my own situations had been very frustrating and discouraging, but from the perspective of six years later, had taken on positive, even humourous aspects that encouraged Rachel. After relating my own experiences to Rachel, I sensed that the tone of the remainder of that interview was quite different from the first one. In my fieldnotes from that interview, I noted that Rachel seemed more comfortable talking about her immediate problems once we had discussed my own experiences with evaluation. In this chapter, my fieldnotes are italicized, as are my speeches in other selected data.

> *I'm not too sure how much of my own past to share with Rachel. I don't want to unduly influence any actions that she takes regarding her relationship with her principal and I don't want her to feel that all she has to look forward to is a year filled with negative reports and frustrating encounters. I'm sure if I had known that in October of my beginning year, I would have quit at Christmas. However, as long as I can select relevant and constructive examples of my own experiences to share, I think they will serve to put Rachel's own experiences into perspective and will perhaps allow me to put those memories to some positive use at last. (Fieldnotes, Oct. 7/86)*

Preparation for the third interview took a new direction. I had promised to show Rachel copies of my own first evaluations and rereading them brought back vivid memories. I still didn't feel very good about them, but felt it was important for me to share them with Rachel. I had also decided to experiment with my role in Rachel's classroom. For the first two interviews, I had remained at the back of the class for the time I was in the room, observing the children and Rachel's interactions with them. During my third visit, I began to move around and talk to

students. When Rachel observed me doing this, she asked me to work with some of the children who were engaged in creative writing. In my fieldnotes following our interview I noted that I felt more useful. I was able to help Rachel with the lesson and I felt that I was getting to know the children better. As Rachel's discussions of her work became more student-focussed, I felt that I would be in a better position to understand her if I continued to work as a "teaching assistant" in the classroom prior to our interview time together.

The place where our interviews were held began to take on greater importance to me. Initially, I had organized my time so that I could spend part of a school day with Rachel and her class and have an interview with Rachel after school. By the time the third interview had taken place, I decided that although spending time in Rachel's classroom was important, the interview immediately following a long day was difficult and tiring for both of us.

> *I got the feeling that it would have been better to have had this particular interview out of the school. It almost seemed that Rachel was speaking in quite surreptitious tones when she was telling me about the plans to join in with the Grade 1 teachers to plan, and when she was discussing her principal. I think moving the site of the interview would help create a less restricted environment. (Fieldnotes, Nov. 7/86)*

While this was not creating tensions or problems in the way Rachel and I related, I felt it was a situation deserving some consideration. If Rachel began to feel constrained or restricted in her discussions, I knew both my interest in the interviews and our subsequent sharing of problems of practice could suffer. I resolved to bring this matter to Rachel's attention and see if we could come to a decision or understanding of it that might change the situation.

Meanwhile, at our fourth interview, I noticed that my presence in the class was beginning to interest Rachel's students. During the interview Rachel told me that she had told them I was coming and they had seemed excited. One student had asked if I could stay longer when I came. In my fieldnotes after the interview I wrote,

> *I really like being part of Rachel's class. I think I know most of their names now, and it's fun when they tell me with such excited voices that they knew I was going to come today. (Fieldnotes, Nov. 26/86)*

This kind of interest reinforced my belief that it was important for all of us (Rachel, her students and me) to be able to count on my work in the classroom and for all of us to derive meaning from it.

As the fall term ended, I could see three dilemmas or puzzles that had emerged: I was still uncertain about my relationship to Rachel and how to express that to her; I felt the need to change the interview environment to facilitate our discussions, and lastly, participation in Rachel's practice demanded that I bring my experience as a teacher into play making me unsure about how to incorporate my personal experience into my interest in Rachel's work from the research perspective.

Reworking the Puzzles

In January, I found Rachel deeply concerned with her students and their learning. This reinforced my resolve to be as well-informed about her class as possible. As I worked with eight students the day of our fifth interview, I found myself evaluating the experience from several standpoints: I became interested in reflecting on my own teaching, and I wanted to explore how my work in the class was affecting Rachel's ability to reflect on her own work. As we discussed the Math lesson, I realized that my participation in the events of Rachel's classroom was creating situations for Rachel to reflect on and learn from.

> *How did you feel about Math today*? It was fine, because you were here! I wondered, "Could I sit on the floor while all the other kids work, or supposedly work, and work with eight kids?" I wondered if I could have kept their attention. (28C5)

I was aware that I was in the comfortable position of being able to work with small groups of children without the responsibility of the full class, and as we discussed this, Rachel seemed eager to take advantage of the fact that I could give her feedback on how various students had worked with a concept. I could see further possibilities for discussion and reflection arising out of my choice to work with her in the classroom.

> *As I worked with eight children today, I was oblivious to what the remainder of the class was doing and yet there must have been a lot of activity and noise. Rachel was working with the rest of the class. I wonder how I would have coped with all 19 or 20 of them, still trying to give special attention to those eight? I like the idea of really exploring concepts with kids and going slowly with them, yet does a teacher have that luxury when she has an entire class to work with? (Fieldnotes, Jan. 22/87)*

Coupled with the interest that I felt in being able to supply Rachel with immediate feedback on her students, was the interest in my own interactions with the children. As I reflected on my work with the students, I recorded my thoughts on how this related to my views of practice.

> *I know I hardly ever was able to achieve that balance [attending to a small group in the context of the class] in my own experience. I did see the need for it, but never really found a way to address it. I always felt that I was doing things too quickly with my Grade 2's -- I was always seeing the big picture but not the individual pieces that go to make up the puzzle. I'm fascinated by the "armchair" observations one can make from the comfortable sidelines of research. But I'm trying to get off the sidelines and into the action! (Fieldnotes, Jan. 22/87)*

My reflections on my personal experiences in teaching and their power to shape my current views of practice were sharpened when Rachel turned one of my own questions back on me. This served to illuminate the fact that Rachel regarded me as a co-worker, someone acquainted with her students; the problem of correctly assessing children's work habits became a shared concern, not a puzzle of practice expressed by Rachel that I was dispassionately recording. My answer reflects the confusion I felt about my own ability to give opinions about teaching and mirrors the difficulty of trying to mesh the role of experienced practitioner with that of researcher.

> Michael is slow at working. But should I let him be like that? Or do I say, "In Grade 3 you're going to be expected to do that." Because as soon as I say that I'll give him a sucker, or threaten him with staying after school, then he'll get it done. So, is it because he's laid-back, or because he finds it boring? I don't think so. *How would you go about solving a problem like that?* Don't ask me that! I don't know! What would you do? *Well, two years ago, I probably would have said, "You're going to be in Grade 3 next year, so you get this done!" But I find my perspective has changed so much. Like I said to you before, I don't know if that is because I am in the very luxurious position of sitting outside the action very comfortably philosophizing about what I think I would do. Maybe if I had to take action, all that would go out the window. (33/34C5)*

Rachel's question served to encourage me to reflect on my own teaching experiences as well as to try to assess my current thoughts about teaching. It prompted me to write in my fieldnotes:

> *There seem to be so many things that I can't imagine ever being able to do or ever thinking that I was able to do, yet did. Could I ever try to do them again? I'm feeling more and more inadequate about going into a classroom again, but I do miss teaching. (Fieldnotes, Jan. 22/87)*

When reflecting on the fifth interview, I was pleased to see some changes occurring in the tone and depth of our discussion. I felt that these changes had been facilitated by our experimentation with a new environment. Prior to arranging the date for the fifth interview, Rachel and I had decided that we would work together in the class as usual, and then go out for something to eat after school and talk there. This was the first time that we had formally recorded our discussion out of school and I documented my impressions of the interview in my fieldnotes.

> *This was (I hope!) one of the best interviews that Rachel and I have had yet. We were able to get away from the school and have an uninterrupted hour to talk. Since we had spent forty-five minutes or so in the classroom at the end of the day talking about various students and how Rachel plans to work with some of the lower kids, I knew that Rachel had attended to her concerns and was willing to spend some time discussing the last transcript and the DataScan. I remember thinking how interesting it was that we were able to return to the question of theory and practice so many times and each time derive a new interpretation of both concepts. Rachel seems comfortable discussing her own practice and is especially growing in confidence of her capabilities--and the recognition of the things that she knows she is not capable of doing this year. I remarked upon that and she discussed that with me on the tape. I'm also really pleased to know that my visits mean so much to her and that it is helpful. I think I knew that, but to hear it expressed is also good. (Fieldnotes, Jan.22/87)*

After this experience, Rachel and I decided that it might be a good idea to move our interviews out of the school and the pattern of our work began to subtly change. I would arrive at Rachel's class in the morning and work with Rachel as her assistant for the rest of the day. At the end of the school day we would have a brief discussion (usually recorded) concerning the day's events. Later, at Rachel's apartment or at a restaurant, we would have a longer, more in-depth discussion of teaching in general. I believed that this sort of arrangement was addressing various needs: we were able to talk about immediate concerns of practice that had arisen that day, and we were also able to discuss Rachel's general impressions of how whe viewed the process of learning to teach.

In the seventh interview, I asked Rachel if she could reflect on my visits and further define my role. I thought it was important to formally record her reactions to this question even though my overall impression was that Rachel enjoyed my visits.

> *What does my coming do, basically?* It helps me put things into perspective. It helps me to reflect. Because I wouldn't find the time otherwise to reflect. It helps me -- it encourages me. Talk to my mother about that one. It helps me to realize that I'm not doing everything wrong, that yes, an experienced teacher like you has gone through the struggles, you see the kids as I see them, it's not my imagination. So that's important. (13C7)

The experiment to change the interview environment seemed to be effective. I could see that Rachel was more relaxed and willing to talk at great lengths over wide-ranging subjects related to her work. Our interviews began to expand; sometimes we would focus on immediate situations that were of concern to Rachel, at other times we would try to understand large educational issues. In our eighth interview, Rachel discussed the problem of trying to listen to all her students read so that she could attempt to effectively assess them. As we talked about the students in Rachel's class that seemed in need of special help, we broached the subject of adult help in the classroom. Rachel said:

> I don't have any! Except you -- you're my adult! You're my mentor -- you tell me and help me. I have a high school student come in once a week, but she needs me to tell her what to do. (14C8)

I began to see the shape my presence in Rachel's class had taken. From being an outsider with uncertain identity, I had moved to a place where I was a fellow-teacher, accessible to Rachel for advice and help as well as providing encouragement and feedback. By creating this role, I acknowledged its inherent complexities. Yet, in reflection on the events that had led to a clearer definition of my role, I could see that its multi-dimensional features could enhance our work together as researcher and practitioner. By becoming co-practitioner, I was encouraging Rachel to examine her practice in an environment characterized by mutual discovery and trust.

The puzzles that coloured my early reflections on my work with Rachel had been distilled through our growing experiences together and now permeated the study. My role in the classroom, my responsibility to Rachel's needs and to the rationale of the study were blending into one conviction: our ways of interacting as fellow researchers, colleagues in learning to teach, were central to my understanding of Rachel's developing practical knowledge and to Rachel's professional understanding of herself.

Levels of Understanding

The duality of my role was more overwhelming than my initial expectations of "being a researcher" had been. While I had entered into the study hoping that my work with Rachel would be a partnership, a "joining of forces in the understanding of practical knowledge," I had not anticipated (and could not have anticipated) the many levels of understanding we would be passing through. As those new levels of understanding were achieved, I became convinced that

without this multi-dimensional relationship, our discussions would lack the capacity to move to deeper understandings of practical knowledge and how it may be developed.

In conversation with Donald Schön, (January 13, 1987) he discussed "levels of puzzles." Each level represents a "place" in the research where the researcher and practitioner relate. Moving from one level to another allows the researcher to more fully enter the world of the practitioner and to share an understanding of practice. Unless the researcher initiates these moves and acknowledges that the practitioner's functions are central to an understanding of practice, the resulting discussion will be superficial. Placing the practitioner and his or her concerns at the heart of the inquiry adds validity and strength of perspective to the research.

The first level of puzzles involves the researcher becoming aware of his or her separation from the practitioner. Once the separateness is acknowledged, the researcher can enlist the help of the practitioner to build a relationship that will open the door into the practitioner's world. From the vantage point of a relationship that includes a belief in dialectical exchanges and interdependent work, the researcher is in a much stronger position to begin to journey to the second level: the concerns and puzzles of the practitioner's professional life.

Schön describes the second level as involving the teacher puzzling over students and "stuff" and over students' understanding of "stuff." This is where the reality of practice exists for the practitioner, and it is here that researchers can begin to mine the valuable insights into how practical knowledge is developed and viewed. At this level, the practitioner and researcher should operate in an environment of mutual understanding: the practitioner knows that the researcher is interested in how practical knowledge is developing and how the practitioner is viewing that development; the researcher understands that the practitioner needs to express his or her practical concerns, both specific and general.

The third level, which Schön calls the "paydirt" level, is the one at which the students puzzle over "stuff." At this level, the innermost character of practical knowledge becomes evident. As a teacher develops practical knowledge, the students are the immediate sources of feedback, ("back-talk") on that knowledge. Trying to understand students' reactions to one's practical knowledge can lead to rich discussions of practice that would enhance any study of teacher thinking, but unless a researcher is prepared to acknowledge and move through the various levels of understanding that he or she holds of the teacher's world, these discussions may be mostly inaccessible.

In puzzling over my relationship with Rachel and wondering how I could best facilitate discussion of her practice, I was operating at the first level of puzzlement. I was aware that I was outside Rachel's world and that in order to enter into her understanding of it, I would somehow have to become a part of it. My thoughts centred on the idea of becoming involved in a practical fashion so that I could see Rachel's practice from her viewpoint, providing a clearer focus for my understanding. Once I had decided to immerse myself in this way, a new puzzle emerged that only led me deeper into the sorts of understandings discussed by Schön. The new puzzle made me aware of the implications of my presence in the classroom and how it was affecting my work and Rachel's work. However, this consideration was of a different nature from the previous one; I had negotiated the "outsider-insider" barrier and now stood within Rachel's practice, ready to try to understand its events.

Operating at the second level of Schön's research puzzles, I was aware that Rachel was puzzling over students and "stuff," but that I needed to facilitate her discussions of this rich material. Working with this consideration, I knew that we had reached another important landmark in the study when the experimentation with the interview environment led to more

evocative discussions from which Rachel was able to gain perspective and I was able to see more clearly into her view of practice.

The Significance of the Dialectical Relationship

Moving from a superficial understanding of Rachel's practice to a deeper, more committed view had required that I become conversant with Rachel's daily work to the extent that I was able to understand her concerns and interests and able to discuss them from a collegial standpoint. The relationship that we held was an important vehicle for moving our mutual understanding of practical knowledge to greater depths, and its capacity for doing so was greatly extended following our eighth interview.

One of Rachel's most frustrating dilemmas in the winter and spring terms had been with evaluation and assessment of her students. As reported in Chapters 3 and 4, this proved to be an ongoing concern that helped outline for both of us the development and use of Rachel's practical knowledge. When the dilemma reached distressing proportions, Rachel and I decided to share our understandings of her students, to try to solve the problem together. This decision came about because of the negligible support system in place for Rachel at her school and because of the nature of our relationship: she expressed confidence and trust in my opinions, and I was interested in continuing to provide assistance to Rachel in whatever form I could as I came to understand her viewpoint more fully.

As we worked together for two days, assessing and evaluating various students, I was aware of having deepened my understanding of the practice of teaching generally, and of Rachel's knowledge of practice specifically. I felt that we had touched on that "inner-circle" of understanding described by Schön--the level at which a teacher observes the students puzzling

over "stuff"--and that I was privileged to be a part of Rachel's observations and deductions. Again, I could see that the environment of trust we were operating in had helped further my belief that problems of practice are important places to begin to build an understanding of the development of practical knowledge.

The Alternating Balance

Our relationship was something we had crafted together. To Rachel, I represented experience in teaching, someone acquainted with the world of practice with an interest in teaching and learning. To me, Rachel represented a living example of a teacher learning to teach. She was a resource accessible to me, who could communicate the tribulations as well as the triumphs of the first year. It was my main concern that the environment we worked in be conducive to this communication. Redefining, or changing my initial perceptions of the research to suit what appeared to be emerging from Rachel's understandings of her work was an important aspect of the task of building a relationship. Rachel's contributions to the job were her innate honesty and curiosity about herself that allowed me to probe beneath the surface layer of her professional world. The interdependent nature of our relationship was strengthened as we worked together to assess and evaluate students in her class; "dialectical" took on new meaning as I turned to Rachel for support when sorting the data and beginning to write.

> *I want to write about how I've been able to talk to you about the study. I can't imagine doing a thesis and not consulting the person who's giving me the material.* I know, I'm like you, I couldn't imagine not hearing from you what you're writing about me! [reading] Yeah, I think you know me. You know what I think? You're probably like me in some ways. Do you think so? *Yes -- I think we relate well to each other. I can understand your style and your thinking. (3C9)*

Rachel's active participation in the writing was valuable. She read all of the data selected for Chapters 3 and 4, making editorial corrections on several sections. She read various draft outlines

of how the data were to be analysed, and supported the idea of a chapter to report my reflections on my role in the research. The following excerpt conveys some sense of the kind of commentary Rachel was able to offer:

> Now, here, I don't know. [Reading, " Rachel's principal gave her a brief and very formal welcome."] I don't think it should be said that way -- he didn't really give me an informal welcome -- it was more that he didn't introduce me to the staff? [Continuing to read, "And intimated from his remarks -- "] I think it was more, "And intimated from his remarks that a new addition to his staff was going to be difficult." Not necessarily because it was my first year, because he had hired another first-year teacher, but it was more the fact that I was landed on him. I think that was more the feeling. He didn't have any say as to me coming to his school. This is good though. It's not full of lots of jargon. [Reading, "Rachel had acted as a leader of students in her teacher education placements."] What does that mean? *I meant that you had operated as a teacher -- when you were a student-teacher.* [Reading, "Her environment is familiar to her in many ways. She has been a student in classrooms for many years and has operated as a leader of students."] *I was trying to explain that you had been a student in a classroom, therefore classrooms were familiar environments to you. But also, you'd operated on the other side of the coin, as a person in charge of the class.* See, I take that to mean that I'm a person who is a leader rather than a follower. I could lead my peers or something. *I guess what I was thinking is that it is sort of an artificial situation when you're a student-teacher. I could have said that you had been a student-teacher and left it at that.* Yeah. Just say that I was a student-teacher. (6C10)

This editorial assistance gave me a clearer idea of Rachel's perceptions of the research. Her interest and advice were genuine and frank, and added much to my understanding of how to present the data. Seeing the study come into print was interesting for Rachel too. September seemed part of the distant past, and reading about her early teaching experiences refreshed her memory and helped her to gain perspective on them.

> It's nice, because you've done all my -- I don't think after June 24th I would have sat back and just spent a week thinking about how I've changed. I would rather just forget teaching for a few weeks. So you've done it for me! I think you've got it well documented -- I can see the progression. I think for a month there I was all caught up in laminating, collecting resources, getting my hands on anything and photocopying it and putting it in a file and being a nice neat organized teacher. (12C10)

Rachel and I were able to share the work we do in ways that are accessible to any two persons who are willing to invest the thought and effort. Learning to open ourselves to the possibility of an alternating balance of strength and support, we reaped the rich rewards of frank discussion and mutual learning. Relationships between researcher and practitioner can be fruitful endeavours, provided they are nurtured in atmospheres of trust and openness, places where risk-taking and reflection are carefully encouraged and sought.

> *I think it's very important, the way you and I have been able to talk to each other. The way you've allowed me into your room and into your class. I think that's very special.* It's because I trust you. You've been no threat. (20C10)

In writing this chapter I wanted to document my personal reflections on the work Rachel and I have shared. I felt that I needed to be aware of my own presence in the research and how I have learned from participating in the study of a beginning teacher's development of practical knowledge. As I traced my reflections, ideas, and actions, I realized that the atmosphere of mutual discovery and learning that Rachel and I endeavoured to foster throughout the year had become a reality and that my learning about research and practice had paralleled Rachel's learning about her own teaching.

Learning about Research and Practice

As a practitioner turned researcher for the purposes of this study, I came to see research from a new perspective. My observations are specific to this work, but have afforded me many glimpses into the practical and philosophical considerations of discovery through inquiry. As I look back on the research, I can point to two major areas of interest that I feel were important to my understanding of learning to be a researcher. The first area deals with the idea of the researcher learning to delve beneath the surface of the practitioner's reality. It became very clear

to me that in order to explore as much as possible of Rachel's view of herself as a teacher, I needed to speak the *lingua franca* of the practitioner. This required a certain level of "bilingualism"--moving between the language of the research literature and the accepted words and definitions embedded in the world of teachers.

The second area of interest lies close to the first. In speaking with a teacher about her practice and learning to converse in the language of that practice, I felt that our discussions needed to deal with all aspects of her work. In order to uncover the problems of practice as well as the successes, I could see that much depended on the dialectical nature of our work as well as the atmosphere in which we talked. As researcher, I found that it was my responsibility to be aware of these necessities and provide for them as effectively as possible. Building on Rachel's entire perspective, the weaknesses as well as the strengths of her work--gave us a much clearer picture of how her practical knowledge developed and also increased the trust and respect we held in and for each other.

Learning about research has led me to re-examine my own knowledge of practice. As I worked with Rachel, I was aware of my thoughts shifting from how Rachel's knowledge was growing to how my own perspective on teaching was changing. Through this kind of self-examination and through our discussions, I became more critical of my own practical knowledge. I learned how to reflect-in-action through my opportunities to work alongside Rachel in her classroom, and I came to see a side of myself as a teacher that had gone unnoticed and unattended to when I was teaching. These reflections on the research process inspired me to continue my self-examination and self-evaluation upon my return to teaching, and have opened a way for me to grow in awareness of myself as a teacher.

Research conducted in a participatory manner can yield much for both participants. It is important to use the dialectical model to address the concerns and interests of both parties, since these are individual and deserving of special consideration. We found that through mutual interest and in sincere efforts to learn from each other, a reciprocal and interdependent relationship not only accomodated our individual perspectives and addressed our particular needs, but also enhanced our understanding of what it means to learn about teaching and how one may develop and understand practical knowledge. The reflections that complemented these learnings have been significant features of the research, serving to indicate how a dialectical relationship can be a powerful and fundamental basis of research into teacher thinking.

Chapter 6

CONCLUSION

This chapter explores ways in which the conceptualizations of practical knowledge and reflection-in-action have been extended by the data of this study. These concepts served as the foundations for this work and have revealed various dimensions that suggest general implications and contributions to the research on teacher thinking. This chapter also includes a discussion of the dialectical relationship that is the methodology for this work. The significance of the dialectical relationship is discussed as it supports the claims of research made by other studies of teachers' practical knowledge.

Extending the Conceptualizations

The Concept of Practical Knowledge

As the study progressed, the conceptualization of practical knowledge constructed by Elbaz (1983) and extended by Clandinin (1986) proved to be limited in one significant respect. The developmental nature of practical knowledge emerged as a dimension of practical knowledge that could not be ignored in the interpretation of the data. Practical knowledge develops continuously; it is not absent one day and present the next. For the beginner, development may be very rapid. For the experienced teacher, it may be so slow as to pass unnoticed.

In studies of teacher thinking that have focussed on the concept of practical knowledge, the literature has shown that experienced teachers are able to demonstrate an awareness of their own practical knowledge and are also able to articulate that awareness. These findings indicate the

possibility of an increase in our professional understanding of teachers' practical knowledge and for teachers to grow in professional understanding of themselves. While this is a significant finding of research on teacher thinking, it is also important to consider practical knowledge as it is developed and articulated by beginning teachers. As noted in the review of the literature, studies of beginning teachers' development of practical knowledge are difficult to find.

This study has shown that a beginning teacher can become aware of and articulate the development of her practical knowledge. Recall Rachel's puzzling over the use of learning centres in her classroom. Although she believed strongly in the idea of learning centres, she found that implementing centres required her to modify her original ideas. This process of modification was apparent throughout the year, but as Rachel grew in experience with her students and learned to adapt ideas and materials more effectively, her developing practical knowledge informed her reflections and her subsequent actions. Through this study, the significance of studying Rachel's developing practical knowledge became evident. The development of practical knowledge, in the midst of practice emerged as an important feature of the process of learning to teach, and was apparent in Rachel's reflections on her actions. This is the important way in which we must see the distinctive nature of practical knowledge: development of practical knowledge occurs within the context of practice combined with reflection on practice.

The Concept of Reflection-in-Action

Schön's (1983) concept of reflection-in-action forces us to seriously consider the significance of reflection on practice for all professionals. This study has demonstrated that the beginning practitioner in the teaching profession can provide important opportunities for exploring the concept of reflection-in-action.

As Rachel was encouraged to reflect upon her experiences, she gained new perspectives on and further understandings of her teaching. Reflection served to change problematic situations into more manageable events of practice that could be controlled and changed to further her understanding of teaching rather than intimidate and defeat her. Again, a good example of this is the potentially problematic situation of the learning centres. Instead of allowing this dilemma to overwhelm her, Rachel decided to experiment with her theories about learning centres, and was able to organize her teaching to include a modified version of a learning centre. Although this modification was not what she had originally envisioned when she began to teach, she became involved in experimenting and reflecting on the situation, and so it became a challenge and a chance to use her knowledge of practice, rather than an insurmountable problem offering no alternative action.

This study has shown the power of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. The reflective process has influenced Rachel's perceptions of herself as she learns to teach, and has given me the opportunity to see into her development of practical knowledge. The dual nature of our reflections complements the dialectical relationship we held and adds consistency to the basic methodology of the study.

The Significance of Methodology

The dialectical relationship I developed with Rachel was significant in extending my understanding of Rachel's views of practice and in furthering our personal views of ourselves as teachers. Examining problems of practice in an atmosphere characterized by mutual interest, and reflecting on new situations as fellow-researchers, allowed Rachel to freely acknowledge dilemmas and puzzles and afforded me a special look into her work and her understanding of it. I

acknowledged the importance of the dialectical relationship between researcher and participant, and sought to make it the foundation of the work Rachel and I shared. As we explored the parameters of our relationship, new dimensions and definitions of the dialectical model appeared, suggesting new ways to relate and new ways to share in the research. The problematic aspects of the dialectical model were few; investing time in our work together in the classroom and in our interviews could have been difficult, but we chose to make this a priority as we learned how important time is to the development of a trusting, reciprocal relationship. To work together, sharing experiences and perceptions, requires that the participants in such a relationship be open to the inherent risks involved and be prepared to discuss, confront and learn from each other's viewpoint. The relationship that Rachel and I held can be characterized by three main elements that demonstrate our exploration of the dialectical model and illustrate some of its various dimensions.

The first element of importance here is the "communicational" aspects of our work together. For example, I made conscious efforts to keep Rachel informed at all times of how the work was progressing. Through transcripts of each interview that were provided for Rachel, outlines of the research as I began to write, and open discussions of our individual needs and concerns at each interview, the communication lines were as open as possible. Our time together was not restricted to interviewing only, and as a result, we were able to build a rapport that transcended that of interviewer to teacher. In this more open relationship, communication became easier as we grew to know each other in a less formal atmosphere that encouraged frank and honest discussions.

A second point of significance here is the "alternating balance" in our relationship between my interest and concern with Rachel's work and the presentation of her understanding of it, and

Rachel's own interest and concerns with her work as well as with the interpretation of the data. Mutually interested in the notion of a dialectical interchange involving both parties in the discussion and work, Rachel and I developed our own approach to sharing; the resulting shifts in balance in our relationship illustrate the exciting possibilities of a reciprocal relationship. As we discussed Rachel's work together, I was able to provide her with opportunities for reflection and a forum for exploration in an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect. When I began to work with the data from our discussions, I turned to Rachel for editorial commentary, and the balance shifted as I learned about interpretation from her and was able to reflect on my own work as researcher.

The third element of our relationship that is significant is the shared nature of the work we did together, and this feature of the study enhanced the research considerably. At the outset, it was easy to assume (unconsciously) that this was a study of one teacher's practice conducted in a "traditional" researcher/participant relationship. The method of a dialectical relationship led us to a shared study of practice within the context of a mutually constructed relationship involving reflective discussion and joint participation. Initially, we both anticipated the shared nature of our work, but this aspect of the study grew spontaneously as well as deliberately. Opportunities for sharing arose with regularity, and it became natural for me to share data, bits of writing, and draft outlines with Rachel, just as she shared her view of practice, dilemmas and reflections on her actions with me. Contributing to this was our compatibility as people and my own status of "beginner" in the world of research. Eager to inform Rachel of the progress of the research as I watched it unfold, I valued her support of my initial attempts to write about what she was telling me.

These three elements shaped our relationship, making it unique and individual. The dialectical model is a framework, open to the craftsmanship of any two persons engaged in research, and it is in the explorations of the model that the open-ended character of a dialectical relationship becomes evident. Our work together is an example of such explorations, emerging from the structure of the dialectical model and redefining, for us, the meaning of collaborative research.

Implications for Further Research

This study was a collaborative effort with Rachel. The power of the dialectical model has been demonstrated in this work, and the possibilities for extension and exploration that such a model holds have been demonstrated. This work has described a kind of research that is based on and intimately related to practice, and as such, the interdependent nature of the relationship I held with Rachel was a key element.

The study has shown that a beginning teacher can share her awareness of her developing practical knowledge, and can demonstrate her ability to reflect on and change her practices. It has been a fruitful endeavour for Rachel and me to work together as researchers into the puzzles and surprising events of her first year. The study has extended the concepts that were its initial foundations, and it has opened up new perspectives on the study of teacher thinking in general. The concept of practical knowledge reveals a new dimension when discussed in the context of a beginning teacher's development of practical knowledge. Rachel demonstrated a development in her practical knowledge that was seen through her reflections on her practice and in her subsequent actions. Perhaps, as a beginner, Rachel felt the impact of additional practical knowledge and experience in a more dramatic way than would a more experienced teacher.

Further studies of beginning teachers' development of practical knowledge might corroborate this claim and add strength to the argument that practical knowledge has a significant developmental feature that can be especially noticed as beginning teachers discuss their work.

The concept of reflection-in-action (Schön, 1983) has also revealed new dimensions for further exploration. This study has shown that a beginning teacher who was encouraged to reflect upon her view of practice and her actions in that practice was able to identify and modify problematic and surprising events. This study has also shown that a beginning practitioner is more inclined to view many events of practice as being problematic and surprising, which may indicate that a beginning teacher's views of practice are different from a more experienced teacher's. When encouraged to reflect on her actions and modify or change problematic situations in her practice, Rachel demonstrated her ability to articulate her understanding of the development of her practical knowledge, and in doing so, revealed her understanding of her work. The power of reflection-in-action to make clear a practitioner's views of practice also helps to make explicit how practical knowledge is developed. The reflective process was significant in this study as a means to make Rachel's views of practice and the development of her practical knowledge more clear. The study of beginning teachers' reflections as ways to further explain their knowledge of practice and their actions as beginning practitioners could be a promising contribution to the work on reflective practitioners.

This study has yielded rich data describing the development of one beginning teacher's practical knowledge. The methodology of the work has added consistency and depth to the research; the dialectical model was explored as fully as possible throughout the study, and was chiefly responsible for the evocative nature of the discussions. Further implications of the research involve the extension of the concepts of practical knowledge and reflection as a means

to make clear the development of practical knowledge in research on beginning teachers. These contributions to the field of research on teacher thinking could provide additional descriptions of how beginning teachers view their practices and how they develop the knowledge to improve those practices.

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Appendix A.

This interview was conducted on November 26, 1986 after a half-day's observation of Rachel's class. The interview was selected as an appendix because it demonstrates Rachel's beginning reflections on her own teaching and indicates a deeper level of discussion from the previous three interviews. The speeches of the interviewer are capitalized.

Interview 4, November 26, 1986

I FOUND SOME THINGS THAT I WOULD LIKE TO TALK ABOUT FROM THE LAST TRANSCRIPT. HERE--I UNDERLINED A FEW THINGS. YES, THIS IS WHEN WE WHERE LOOKING AT THE REPORTS. THE PART WHERE YOU TALK ABOUT YOUR ROUTINES AND HOW YOU WOULD LIKE TO SIT DOWN AND GO THROUGH THEM STEP BY STEP IN YOUR MIND, BEFORE PRESENTING THEM TO THE CLASS. IS THIS SOMETHING DO YOU THINK THAT YOU'LL BE DOING THIS WEEK-END AS YOU GET READY TO MOVE?

1C4 Yes. I'll go home and think who am I going to put with who? in the seating arrangement. And I'll think were am I going to physically place my Math centre, my Extra centre, my Puzzle centre. Like this last few weeks I've been busy in getting all my things together, and putting them into baskets. And as you can see I've been using puzzles and I'm just wondering if I shouldn't have say a separate puzzle centre, and a separate Math centre. Then I used to have the puzzles with the Math centre. But I wondering if someone comes in and says, "Why are you using puzzles as a extra activity?" If I could validate it--I think I would. But I'm not sure so I kind of have to go home and think about why I do things the way I do.

AND ARE YOU GOING TO BE THINKING ABOUT RULES OF OPERATION FOR THAT PARTICULAR SPACE THAT THOSE KIDS ARE GOING TO BE IN?

2C4 I think so, I'll start all over again. As if I was going in the class in September, and briefly go over the rules that we made in Library and show that they apply in the portable.

AND EXPLAIN HOW THEY WILL APPLY?

3C4 I think so.

HOW DID YOU MAKE THOSE RULES UP? I DON'T THINK WE EVER DID TALK ABOUT THAT.

4C4 I had a book. And it was very simple and it talked about classroom management, it said to make your rules simple and here's three of them. And so I took them right out of there, because I thought they would apply to my kids.

WHAT ARE THEY?

5C4 Oh I have my rules, where are they? One person speaks at a time. [Oh, my mind has gone blank]. You do not get out of your desk, until you ask or unnecessarily. [or I don't know if I was that strict!] But my pet peeve and I told them was that talking you are listening, because it rude. And so I went through it with them why.

AND SO WHAT DID THEY SAY AFTER THAT? DID THEY SAY, "WE HAVE SOME RULES THAT WE WOULD LIKE." OR DID THEY JUST TAKE THOSE AND GO WITH THEM? DID THEY HAVE ANY INTEREST IN THEM?

6C4 Well I asked them what things they didn't like to see happen in the class. I can't remember if I asked that to the Grade 3 or the Grade 2's, or both. But I did ask them what things they didn't like happening? No kicking, no biting. Actually it was the Grade 3 class I asked that, 00081 and they said, "No fighting, no this, no that." So I put no fighting--yes sharing, no kicking--yes--and just did the opposite.

SO THAT'S SORT OF WHAT YOU'LL BE DOING ON MONDAY? THAT'S GOOD BECAUSE I'M JUST--I HAVE A CONSIDERATION ABOUT COMING HERE ON THE DAY THAT YOU GO INTO THE PORTABLE. I TOLD YOU ABOUT THAT ON THE PHONE. AND I'VE GOT TO THINK ABOUT THAT BECAUSE IT COULD BE VERY VALUABLE. AND I MIGHT BE OF HELP TO YOU ON THAT DAY. SO THAT WAS INTERESTING IN THE TRANSCRIPT, I DID UNDERLINE A FEW THINGS. THAT I THOUGHT I COULD ASK YOU WHAT YOU MEANT AGAIN. OH YES, AT THE BEGINNING WE WERE TALKING ABOUT MY REPORTS FROM MY FIRST YEAR, AND YOUR REPORT AND SO ON. AND WHEN YOU'RE HAVING YOUR READING GROUP, THE KIDS INTERRUPTING THE READING GROUP. SO THAT YOU HAVE SAID TO THE ONES WHO ARE NOT IN THE GROUP, "SKIP ONTO THE NEXT ONE, WHEN YOU FIND ONE YOU CAN DO. BUT DO NOT INTERRUPT THE READING GROUP!" THAT RULE, DO NOT INTERRUPT THE READING GROUP. HOW DID THAT EVOLVE?

7C4 I just told them, I explained to them. That when I have the unicorns over on the carpet, "What is one thing you do not do?" And they put their hands up, "We don't interrupt." "And if it was your turn how would you like it if people kept coming over and bugging you when you were reading to the teacher or reading to other people. And sharing your ideas you don't want to be interrupted." So I have been as consistent as I can be with that, but sometimes due to my own error. You know I forget to explain to one child who's doing an individualized program. So I have to break my rule almost and come back and talk to her. But other times I try to be consistent and most of the time when a child will come over and say, "Miss Linden, Miss Linden!" I will just ignore them until they finally realize that they must sit down at their desks.

SO THE RULE EVENTUALLY APPLIES, OR MAKES A GOOD APPLICATION WHEN THEY SEE YOU ENFORCING IT.

8C4 Even now, I don't know if it pleases me but they know that if they don't get their Phonics done, they will come and get an activity and not waste their time. Which does please me but

in another sense you wonder how much they're scuffing off just because they want to play a game or do some activity.

O.K. THAT'S TRUE BECAUSE THEY KNOW THAT THEY'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO COME AND INTERRUPT YOU. SO THEY MIGHT GET THIS FEELING THAT, I CAN'T GO UP AND TALK TO HER SO I'LL JUST DO IT WHATEVER WAY I THINK. THAT GOES IN A LOT WITH WATCHING YOU ESTABLISH THE ROUTINES. BECAUSE TO ME YOU ARE PUTTING INTO PRACTICE SOMETHING THAT YOU THOUGHT ABOUT CAREFULLY AND HOW IT'S GOING TO AFFECT YOUR TEACHING. AND SO HOW DO THOSE THINGS WORK, YOU THINK ABOUT SOMETHING AT HOME. YOU THINK OH THAT'S GOING TO WORK, I THINK, AND I'M GOING TO TELL THEM THAT THIS IS A RULE AND WE'LL WATCH IT WORK.

9C4 And also along with that idea I've made a point in the last few weeks of saying when I explain to them their phonics sheet for example, I'll say, "This is the phonics sheet, you listen once I'm going to say the instructions and if you don't listen now you won't know what to do and you can just sit there." And so I'll just get upset with them if they come to me afterwards and say, "I don't know what to do." Which they rarely do actually. But they might not know now to do it and I'll say well it's O.K. if you don't know how to do it. You put your hand up and I'll be there as quickly as I can. But if you don't know how to do it and you're sitting there and doing nothing, than I'm not pleased. You pull out a book and read it and do something like that.

AND THAT FOLLOWS FROM THE IDEA THAT--

10C4 They're not wasting time.

THAT TIME SHOULD BE USED EFFECTIVELY IN THE CLASSROOM, AND THEREFORE IF YOU'RE STUCK ON THE SHEET I GAVE YOU, I HAVE SOME RULES TO HELP YOU TO LET YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO. AND THE RULE IS YOU PUT THE SHEET TO ONE SIDE WHEN I AM BUSY AND YOU GET SOMETHING ELSE OUT.

11C4 Now I haven't portrayed that as concretely as I would like to. I think that if I had started from day one with them--next year I'll have had the experience so I will say to them, "This is what you do." And have it more structured especially during the reading group.

WELL THAT'S WHAT I AM INTERESTED IN IS HOW YOU BUILD ON WHAT'S HAPPENED BEFORE. AND HOW YOU THINK ABOUT THINGS AND THEN TRY IT OUT AND IF IT DOESN'T WORK, IT GOES EITHER INTO THE DISCARD OR TRY AGAIN PILE. I THINK THERE IS A CATEGORIZATION OF WHAT YOU KNOW AND WHAT YOU DO. AND IT ALL WORKS TOGETHER SOMEHOW, THAT'S WHAT I AM--YEAH I WAS INTERESTED IN THIS SECTION WHERE YOU TALKED ABOUT THE BOOK, THE BOOK WITH NO PICTURES AND IT DIDN'T REALLY WORK OUT. AND YOU PHASED IT OUT AND GOT ANOTHER BOOK IN. AND YOU SAID, "I'M NOT BEING CONSISTENT BUT I WOULD RATHER HAVE THEIR ATTENTION." IS

THAT SOMETHING THAT YOU HAVE ANY MORE THOUGHTS ON, OR HAS ANYTHING ELSE LIKE THAT HAPPENED THAT YOU CAN THINK OF?

12C4 Well over the last few weeks I haven't been doing centres. And that's because I obviously have them more at my finger tips when they're not in centres. And I mean you hear all about being a child centred, rather than a teacher centred education. And I'm totally for that and I hope that's the way I run my classroom. However having--at first I do want--not to have control of them. I want them to be responsible to think on their own, but at the same time I don't think it's a contradiction. But I want to be able to feel like I know where they're at. Like right now I'm learning what a Grade 2--how they think. So I want to know how they're writing and the only way I can monitor them, is to have them all write at the same time. And watch and see what they do and share at the same time. Because the other way I found taking the time to turn the desks around and getting all organized, I was jumping all over from place to place. And they weren't finishing off their work. Remember when you came and there were centres and there was five kids using the study carrells for creative writing. Well yesterday for example I did a creative writing story. We looked at a film on tracks and then talked about tracks. And then I had drawn two of my footprints on paper, and they had to take it and write a story. And I gave them story starters like, "You're in the forest and you are lost, and you come across some bear tracks." Well all of them busily got to work, I mean Adam was writing a page. Whereas over there he was just diddling away thinking, "Oh I can't do this, or I don't know how to start!" Oh and another thing! As far as writing stories they know that, they try their spelling words out, they sound them out. If they can't get them that way, they go and they look in their word book, and if they can't get them that way they go to the dictionary. And if they can't find it in the dictionary they put their hand up I'll come over write it on a piece of paper and it immediately goes in their word book. And then they use it that way.

WHERE DID YOU GET THAT IDEA FROM? THAT'S GOOD.

13C4 From Me!

FROM YOU, SO WERE YOU TRYING SOMETHING THAT DIDN'T WORK BEFORE THIS?

14C4 Well I didn't like the idea of them always putting up their hand and relying on me for the spelling words. I like them always to sound it out, but then I wanted a balance between them just writing and never knowing how to spell it correctly. Because I get scared about when you're revising their work with them how much should you check and how much shouldn't you check. So I wanted them to have the freedom, I wanted them to have the feeling that--I didn't want them to feel that they where being cheated by letting them get away with incorrect spelling words, and me not correcting them. But I wanted to do it in a fair way. So I found that if they took the responsibility and they sounded it out on their own, and a lot of them could get words that way. And they could rely on themselves instead of always relying on me. And if that didn't work then go to their word book, and if that didn't work go to the dictionary. And they like using dictionaries.

AND HOW IS THAT WORKING?

15C4 It's working O.K. I mean I can't--I haven't had time to monitor to see how their spelling is improving. But I've noticed and I've wrote a couple of comments in report cards. That kids are becoming more conscious of their spelling. Which I like but in a sense I've been in classes where they are too conscious of their spelling and it inhibits them.

YES I HAVE SEEN THAT TOO AND THAT IS FRUSTRATING. BECAUSE THEN THEY WON'T WRITE.

16C4 But from the results that I'm getting they are writing and--some kids like Brad are now writing three pages. And Jean--I mean she would rather sit there and finish her story than come to an activity.

SO THEY'RE DEVELOPING SOMETHING, GOOD. QUICKLY, BECAUSE I KNOW YOU HAVE TO GO OFF AND GET THEM. MAYBE WE CAN SAVE THESE FOR THE WHOLE GROUP TO TALK ABOUT TONIGHT. COULD YOU GO OVER AGAIN WHAT'S GETTING EASIER?

17C4 I think they're getting more into their routine of knowing what is coming next. It's still varied but they know there's a Math time. Whereas sometimes they would ask me questions. We'd be doing fractions and a couple of them would say, "Is this Math time?" Because they wouldn't know. Because I didn't think it was my place to say, "O.K. now we are going to do Math." You know I just thought I would blend my activities into one another. I find the morning--the first 15 minutes of the morning the simplest. Because they line up they come up here, there are announcements, and then they--I tell them to go and sit at my chair, and then I read them a story. And they are anticipating that, and then I say to them, "On your way back to your desk very quietly look on the board there's a joke of the day. See if you can read it!" And I go back and I say, "Any volunteers." And they all want to bring joke books to school now. We go through that and then we'll have a game, like spelling. That's something that I found very effective for me. Is giving them a list of spelling words, this is what I do now. I had an interview with a parent and she liked the idea of sending spelling work home, so the parents could go through it with them. So they now on Monday write up their spelling words and then on Friday they have a dictation. They love dictation, they just love it! All the way through the week just before phonics I'll say, "Do we have any actors or or actresses that would like to act out a spelling word?" And you know they all want to start off with Nadine. Nadine will act out a spelling word, and I'll say, "You're going to be timed starting now." They will have a minute and if somebody hasn't guessed it by then, they will have to give the word up and choose someone else to go up to the front. Now I find that effective and it works, and they like it.

THAT'S A GOOD IDEA! DO YOU HAVE TO GO GET THEM?

18C4 Yes. [pause in tape]

WHAT ABOUT THE PORTABLE? WHAT DOES IT REPRESENT?

19C4 It's a haven. Represents a new start in a sense, represents organization to me, represents having your own space. And in a sense quieter because there's not going to be other interruptions so the frustration is going to be less. And yet because there's not carpet, noisier.

THAT'S TRUE.

20C4 More board space, more bulletin boards, a place to put my stuff. Like all the stuff I need in my desk.

YOU MENTIONED LAST TIME THAT YOU HAD HAD THREE STARTS. SO IT'S KIND OF LIKE A FRESH START?

21C4 Not totally fresh I mean they still know my personality and yet I'm wondering if myself--I will be more relaxed. Because I find parading in from of the office six times a day, and taking my kids all the way that hall is like that wears me out more than anything. Just making sure before I go that they are all quiet, and walking down the hall quietly. And then keeping them quiet while they put their coats on, and this way it's my--I'm not going to come down on them. You know kids always want to go down and get something that they had forgotten. Always bugging me about that kind of stuff.

THEY'RE VERY FAR AWAY FROM THEIR THINGS, AREN'T THEY?

22C4 But I'm wondering want I'm going to work out about washrooms. Yet I don't agree with them taking 10 minutes before every recess.

IS THAT WHAT A LOT OF TEACHERS DO HERE?

23C4 Well the Grade 1's do that. I don't know I haven't talked to the Grade 2 teacher about what she does. But otherwise I'd have like Matthew he'd want to go all the time, and take a half hour to get his coat on and half hour to come back.

YES BECAUSE IN THE WINTER THEY WOULD HAVE TO PUT THE WHOLE OUTFIT ON TO GO IN THE SCHOOL, TO GO TO THE WASHROOM. WELL THAT'S SOMETHING YOU'LL HAVE TO THINK ABOUT THEN. ANOTHER THEME THAT I SAW COMING THROUGH WAS BEING CONSISTENT.

24C4 Well that's always one of my pet peeves. It's always a concern of mine. Like something I say to one child I don't--for example I hadn't really made clear in my own mind whether I was going to let the basket of Language activities be used after the Math or if I was just going to say, "No, you have to choose a Math activity. You can't choose Speak and Spell." And I talked to Tom....and I asked him, and I talked to a couple of other teachers and they said there' no reason why you can't do Language across the curriculum. I mean if they really want to go and play a vowel game, what's the problem. I guess they're right. So one day I said one thing and the next day Matthew came to me and said, "But you said yesterday that I

couldn't play with it." And I said, "Well I've been thinking about it and I think that maybe I could change that rule, and you can choose any activity." So he said, "Fine."

SO NOW THEY KNOW THAT WHEN--

25C4 See I haven't told the whole group yet but I think that will be my opportunity in the portable. I'll say, "This is this basket, this is this basket, this is were you put this away." Because I mean there's no place to put anything away.

AND IT WILL BE PUBLICIZED THEN THAT WHEN THEY DO HAVE THIS ACTIVITY TIME, THEY CAN GO TO ANY ONE, IT DOESN'T MATTER WHICH ONE THEY GO TO. HOW DO YOU THINK THEY'LL FEEL?

26C4 Well at least they'll know to put things away. As much as possible I've tried to put things in boxes with elastic bands around. Well not even elastic bands because I know those get lost. It's hard to make them decorative and make them pleasing for them, and they should be able to put them away. I put bristol board down, and put this is where the scissors go, this is where the crayons go, and at the end of the day I'll have someone check that to make sure that they are all there. See the only thing is I have to allow time for someone to check. I get so caught up in teaching and interacting I say, "Leave it nobody sharpens pencils because nobody has time." Like now the pencils are running low as they're all saying, "Can I go and sharpen it." In a sense yes I want them to be responsible and go and sharpen it and they don't have to ask me. But in another sense all of them are at the pencil sharpener all day.

SO THAT TIES IN WITH THE THIRD THEME THAT I SAW WHICH WAS BEING ORGANIZED. GETTING MATERIALS AND ROUTINES ORGANIZED TO THE POINT WHERE YOU WOULDN'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT THOSE TYPES OF THINGS. YOU COULD GET ON WITH WHAT YOU SEE AS BEING SOMEWHAT MORE IMPORTANT. I AM GETTING THE IDEA THAT PERHAPS IN THE PORTABLE THINGS WILL BE EASIER TO ORGANIZE.

27C4 I think so. Instead of having--I'll have one place to put you know phonics sheets when they are done. Because that little desk, and it's got dictionaries, it's got tons of stuff on it. I'll always be able to say, "This is where it goes. You know it goes there when you are done."

CAN I GO BACK TO SOMETHING THAT YOU MENTIONED TO ME ABOUT HALF AN HOUR AGO?

28C4 Sure.

WHY WERE YOU A LITTLE BIT CONCERNED ABOUT THE FUR LESSON? WHAT WAS IT THAT BOTHERED YOU?

29C4 I think I'm just tired in the first place and I just was all keyed up because I knew these furs would be exciting to touch. And it bothered me because, first of all I've got them in a

circle and I didn't know whether to hold it up and say--or get their attention and at the same time let them feel it. Because they all went nuts when I let them feel it. So I stood up and I thought that I would take the fur around and let each one of them feel it. And then all the rest of them, started you know, "You're sitting too close to me and you weren't paying enough attention." So finally after about 5 or 6 furs and we had had a reasonably good discussion and they were able to touch it. And I said to them afterwards, "They're going to be here the rest of the week, you can feel them as much as you want." And then I said, "Forget it, go back to your desks!" And about 7 or 8 of them said, "Now look what we've done, we've really wrecked it."

REALLY! SO THEY KNEW THAT IT WAS CHANGING FROM BEING VERY INFORMAL TO BACK TO--

30C4 Right! They said, "Oh look we've wrecked it! Look what we've done." They didn't blame me they said, "Look we've done that." One child said, "Oh." A couple of times through it I just sat there with my arms folded, and I'd just be quiet and wait until they were quiet. And one girl said, Leah said, "Oh I don't know I don't like it like this." "I don't like it." And so Eileena said, "Look you're touching them just as much as anybody else." So I just ignored that, but when they came back they knew. I said, "Put your heads down on your desks and think about why we're back here now. Instead of in a circle." And then I just handed out things individually but even at that I didn't feel very good about it.

WHY?

31C4 I don't mind the noise level and I don't mind them talking but you know I said, "You can try them on." So they all tried them on but they got carried away with the trying on aspect. Instead of focusing on what the purpose I had the furs there for. But maybe for me, my focus wasn't focused enough. Like I should have talked about long hair, short hair, and maybe I should have done a bit more.

YOUR PURPOSE WAS?

32C4 I wanted them to experience touching them and we've been talking about mammals from the woods. So I wanted them to associate the different furs, but I think I should have done some pre-work first.

BEFORE THE ACTUAL FURS CAME BECAUSE THAT DROVE IT ALL OUT OF THEIR MINDS?

33C4 Well it just got them distracted from realizing. It was very interesting because Matt was sitting there, and when I first took one fur out, Elena said, "Oh I don't like it, I don't like it! I don't like you bring out these animals, they hurt!" And so I said, "Well let's talk about that Elena. How do you feel about having a lady wear a fur coat?" "I don't like it. Because it's not fair to the animal." And I said, "Well now a days, I mean it used to be very cruel the way they killed them. But now they are a lot more human, and they are kinder, and they kill them, and they skin them. But it's not so painful for the animals." Matthew piped up and said,

"Yes I know." And for about four minutes he had their attention, and he was very good. The first time I really--he said,--I guess he watches the nature series. But he said, "Oh yes, hunters go and they take a gun and they shoot it and there is a dart comes out of it. And it goes into the animal and the the animal sleeps, and than the person puts a red tag on its ear and also it has a tracking device with it." This is what he said. And I sat there, and I was learning when he was talking. I was sitting there thinking I should have read up on all this stuff. I just said, "Well isn't that interesting Matthew, you really know a lot about this. Tell me what do they do next?" And he said, "Well they shoot the dart in and the animals fall asleep and then they skin them or they take them to labs were they're going to do tests on them." And I said, "Well tell me what kinds of tests do they do?" "Well they find out about how it lives, where it lives, and all those kinds of things."

ISN'T THAT FASCINATING. AND WAS THIS ALL HAPPENING WHILE YOU ALL WERE BEING INFORMAL?

34C4 And all the kids were sitting there and they listened. After Matt got going for the first time--I think--

DO YOU THINK THAT CONTRIBUTED PARTLY TO THE ATMOSPHERE THAT THEY FELT THEY HAD WRECKED. THAT HERE WAS THIS PERSON ACTUALLY SHARING HIS KNOWLEDGE, WAS BEING VERY INFORMAL. BECAUSE I'M WONDERING WHAT THEY MEAN WHEN THEY SAY, "WE'VE WRECKED IT." WHAT IS THE "IT" THAT THEY HAVE WRECKED?

35C4 I don't know.

THE NICE SHARING, THE ATMOSPHERE. THAT COMES TO MY MIND. I DON'T KNOW WHAT COMES TO THEIR MINDS. ISN'T THAT INTERESTING THOUGH THAT--INTERESTING THAT HE WOULD KNOW ALL THAT AND BE WILLING TO TALK ABQUT IT. SO PROFICIENTLY.

36C4 Very proficiently.

AND THEN SECONDLY THAT THEY KNEW THINGS HAD GOTTEN OUT OF HAND AND THAT THEY WERE GOING TO HAVE TO GO BACK TO WHAT THEY SEE AS A MORE RIGID SECTION OF THE CLASSROOM.

37C4 I found myself that I didn't yell--a lot of times I think I get a little bit upset and my voice raises, and I get upset with them. And then their's will raise. So I said very quietly--you know I just sat there and waited a bit and looked very disappointed or--I had to send Jason back to his desk. Because he tends to push in a circle.

IN A CIRCLE SITUATION?

38C4 And he was just--he wanted to see everything going on. So finally I said, "If you feel that you can be responsible and join the group, and sit quietly, than you're welcome to join us." And he came.

SO THAT WAS GOOD. UNTIL THEY ALL STARTED.

39C4 Well he still went on a bit, but--

I JUST WANTED TO GO BACK TO THAT BECAUSE I SENSED THAT IT WAS A CONCERN TO YOU. THAT YOU FELT THAT THINGS HADN'T GONE RIGHT, AND I CAME IN AT THE SECOND HALF OF THE LESSON, SO I DIDN'T SEE THE FIRST--PROBABLY MORE CASUAL SECTION WHERE THEY WERE SHARING THEIR INFORMATION. I THOUGHT IT WAS SO INTERESTING THAT THEY ALL HAD A SAMPLE IN FROM OF THEM, AND WHERE ABLE TO FEEL IT AND SO ON. I WASN'T GETTING THE TOTAL PICTURE, SO THAT'S WHY I JUST WANTED TO EXPLORE THAT WITH YOU.

40C4 One thing--I don't know if you will find this interesting but, they--When I told them that you're coming. They really enjoy that, and like Jason. He said to me, "Where is Miss Spafford? You said that she was going to be here." So I thought, well it matters to him. I mean I told him something and he was expecting it to be so. And I maybe some of these kids have had disappointments, and--

YES. AND I THINK IT'S BOUND TO HAPPEN TO--LIKE BRENDA EXPRESSED THE CONCERN GETTING AROUND TO EVERYONE. AND FEELING BADLY THAT SHE HADN'T GOTTEN AROUND TO TALKING TO PEOPLE AND, MAYBE THEY WERE EXPECTING ME TO GO BACK AND LOOK AT THAT AND I DIDN'T GET THERE. I THINK THAT'S A VERY COMMON CONCERN. THAT YOU JUST WONDER, HAVE I MISSED SOMEBODY!

41C4 Yes I feel that all the time.

I'M NOT GOING TO KEEP YOU TOO LONG HERE NOW. I MADE THIS UP FOR YOU. IT'S JUST A LITTLE LETTER ABOUT WHAT I'M DOING AND SOMETIME WITHIN THE NEXT COUPLE OF WEEKS, WHENEVER YOU GET A CHANGE TO SIT DOWN YOU CAN READ IT. IT GIVES A LITTLE BIT OF A FOCUS. NOW BRENDA EXPRESSED THE CONCERN THAT MAYBE IF SHE KNEW WHAT I WAS THINKING ABOUT, SHE WOULD TRY TO DIRECT HER ANSWERS MY WAY. AND I DON'T MEAN THAT TO HAPPEN. BUT I ALSO THOUGHT IT WOULD BE GOOD FOR YOU TO KNOW JUST WHAT IT IS THAT I'M LOOKING AT FOR MY OWN THESIS. NOT SO THAT YOU WILL GEAR YOUR THINKING ANY PARTICULAR WAY BUT IT MIGHT HELP YOU. I'VE GOT ONE QUESTION THAT I JUST NEED TO ASK YOU VERY QUICKLY. DID YOU KEEP A JOURNAL OR A WRITING FOLDER IN THE PILOT PROJECT LAST YEAR, AS TO HOW YOU WERE GOING ALONG?

42C4 Oh, just a bit of one.

I JUST WONDER IF IT MAY BE OF SOME INTEREST?

43C4 Sure. I can dig it up.

JUST MAYBE IT MIGHT TALK A LITTLE BIT ABOUT--IT MIGHT TRACK YOUR EXPERIENCE DURING THE PROJECT. THAT YOU MIGHT HAVE TRIED TO PROJECT IN THAT WHAT YOU THINK REAL TEACHING WOULD BE LIKE. DO YOU REMEMBER ANYTHING LIKE THAT?

44C4 I don't think so. I just talked about my pet peeves, I didn't like this that was going on--and I think I would rather have it this way.

IT WOULD STILL BE INTERESTING IF YOU GET A CHANCE TO LOOK FOR IT, DON'T MAKE A BIG DEAL OUT OF IT. AND I'M GOING TO ASK EVERY ONE A COUPLE OF QUESTIONS TONIGHT JUST TO GET THE DISCUSSION GOING. I'M QUITE OPEN TO TALK ABOUT ANYTHING.

45C4 Just ask them where [Faculty of Education] was deficient and we'll have--

THE QUESTION THAT I'M GOING TO ASK THAT IS SIMILAR TO THAT IS--IS IT LIKE YOU THOUGHT IT WOULD BE?

46C4 Well I don't know. You see Kim wasn't in the Pilot Project. I think Brenda and I could--

PERSONALLY, JUST TALK ABOUT YOU.

47C4 I think it's like I thought--like the little extra things like--I don't think that in your first year that a teacher should do extra curricular. See that's one benefit of me being here and not being chosen to be here. I didn't say I was going to do all these things, and he thinks--and I agree with him. He says that, "You should--first year teachers should take it--you're getting into the routine of the classroom, you shouldn't be pressured on it". And I can see where it would be a major problem it I had to coach a volleyball team, plus do my report cards, plus manage a class. Now it might be different if I had set up--I'd already been set up. You see that's the thing this isn't normal so I don't know.

NO. NO. GENERALLY SPEAKING THOUGH. MAYBE YOUR INTERACTIONS WITH THE KIDS AND THE DAY TO DAY ROUTINE THAT YOU GO THROUGH. IS IT WORKING OUT LIKE YOU THOUGHT IT WOULD?

48C4 I mean--I often think to myself, wait till next year! wait till next year, I'll be organized! Wait till next year! Meaning that in the summer I'll do this, this, and this. And I know what the curriculum is, I know what things I have to collect, guidelines I have to be thinking about. I know what to expect as far as Christmas concerts, I'll know what to expect for parents night. Things like parents night you don't give it a great deal of thought. I mean when you're

student teaching. Report cards I don't think we were taught enough how to evaluate. In the course we were given all these questions to ask about evaluating but he didn't give us any concrete things about how we should write a report card, and how detailed it should be in. We had practical tests.

SO YOU SEE NEXT YEAR AS A CHANCE TO FINALLY USE THE ACCUMULATION OF YOUR KNOWLEDGE THAT YOU WILL GAIN THIS YEAR?

49C4 Kim and I were talking last night and I said, "I feel sometimes my kids are getting short changed. Because they are getting all the experiments from me." And she said, "Yes but you're fresh, you're new, you're enthusiastic. And as a brand new teacher you're giving them brand new ideas."

THAT'S THE BALANCE! WELL THAT'S A VERY COMMON CONCERN, I THINK, IT CERTAINLY IS. AND KIM IS RIGHT, YOU ARE BRINGING SOMETHING WITH YOU. YOUR NOT COMING EMPTY HANDED EVEN THOUGH YOU MAY FEEL THAT YOU ARE.

50C4 And another thing. Something I've been thinking about for the past few weeks. I feel that I'm not--my professional knowledge is not good.

WHY DO YOU FEEL THAT?

51C4 Because, I mean I'm just learning to cope in the classroom. I learning to establish a routine, establish a trust. And all those types of things, and I haven't--that my time is not free--when it is free I certainly don't want to pick up a book on "How to Teach--How Children learn to spell" Maybe I'm not being as professional as I could be. But I think in a couple of years once I get myself feeling that way maybe then I'll pick up some books on the theory of "Why." You see it shouldn't be that way, I should have all that theory and than be able to apply it. Certainly I know about inventive spelling and I know about things that I learned from the Reading for the Love of it Conference and things I learned from P.D. days. And a few minor things from [Faculty of Education] and the trend in education. But I don't really know the meaty things that I feel that I should know.

WELL THAT'S WHAT MAY DEVELOP THIS YEAR, YOU MAY BE SURPRISED.

(TAPE ENDS).

Appendix B.

This interview was conducted on March 12, 1987 following a full day spent in Rachel's classroom with the interviewer functioning as a teaching assistant. The interview was held in a restaurant not far from the school. This interview was selected because it demonstrates the increasing breadth and depth of Rachel's concerns as the year moves into its final months. This interview also shows how the interviewer is becoming increasingly familiar with Rachel's practice through work in the classroom. Speeches of the interviewer are capitalized.

Interview 7, March 12, 1987

CAN WE TALK ABOUT WHAT YOU JUST SAID, HOW THEY GO INTO THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND THEY LEARN THINGS NOT TO DO?

1C7 Well, I was just reading Brenda's [DataScan] and she tends to have said the same thing as me. [Reading] "The most important thing at the Faculty of Education is the time in the schools, but they don't prepare you for teaching as such, they prepare you -- they show you more what you wouldn't do in the classroom than what you would do."

DO YOU MEAN IN THE CLASSES AT [FACULTY OF EDUCATION] THEY SHOW YOU THAT?

2C7 No, in the practicum. In the school we were at, unless they put you into an ideal framework -- who knows where you'll end up, but Brenda ended up unstructured, I ended up where it was structured. If we had known -- if Brenda had known ahead of time that she was going to be in that area she would have probably not wanted to have sat in on [Associate's] class because she was structured. It wasn't an ideal model. You're not seeing ideal models -- you're having to take them as they are and select what you like from them. I think in the case that Brenda and I were in with [Associate] we took a lot of things that we didn't like, instead of (saying) "Well, there's a few things we'll take here -- "

WHAT ABOUT THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION IN GENERAL THOUGH, WHEN YOU'RE THERE DOING YOUR COURSES, IS THERE ANYTHING --

3C7 That sticks in my mind?

WELL, LET ME REPHRASE THIS BETTER. I KNOW THAT THERE'S THINGS THAT YOU'VE SAID THAT TEACHER EDUCATION DIDN'T DO FOR YOU, LIKE "I DON'T KNOW HOW TO TEACH A CERTAIN THING PROPERLY, I'M HAVING TO LEARN TO DO IT MYSELF THIS YEAR." IS THAT FAIR TO SAY FIRST OF ALL, BEFORE I GO ANY FURTHER? DID THEY TEACH YOU HOW TO GO ABOUT SETTING UP A SPELLING PROGRAM, FOR EXAMPLE?

4C7 No. Not to my knowledge.

SO ARE YOU TEACHING YOURSELF HOW TO DO THAT?

5C7 I'm learning from other teachers. The spelling program I have set up now I just got from another teacher. The individualized spelling. My reading program I have to do because that's the way my principal told me to do it. And I'm modifying it from tidbits I'm getting from other teachers.

O.K. IS THERE ANYTHING THAT CAME FROM THE PROGRAM AT THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION?

6C7 That I can use? All I basically got from there, if I can narrow it down, was the emphasis on not being traditional but being more individual, getting at the child's individual needs. Hands on materials. That kind of thing. [Faculty of Education] taught me kind of an overall philosophy of what was bad and what was good and what you should be steering towards. But it didn't give me any meaty stuff to take away and chew on, it just kind of left me there. It gave me all these things to think about. In Grading and Evaluation. He didn't solve the problem of grading and evaluation for us, and I didn't expect him to. But I expected him to give us a little more concrete ideas instead of saying, "Well, this is the way it happens, and this is how evaluation is wrong and this is subjective etc. etc." Well, so what? SO WHAT DO I DO WHEN I SEE A REPORT CARD, IS THAT WHAT YOU MEAN? Yes! They never gave us that. And [instructor] gave us the idea of hands on -- he just gave us so many ideas and it was just a matter of remembering them. They were good ideas and I use some of them even now, but I mean -- I guess it's hard for them to know what grade we'll have and what has to be covered in each grade, so out of all of them I would say [instructor] gave us the most, because he did give us exact things that we could do if we teach Measurement, or if we did teach Fractions or something. And the same with Science, [instructor] gave us exact Science lessons. I haven't used any of them and I don't know if I would -- I'd have to modify them a lot.

DOES THAT GO ALONG WITH WHAT YOU SAID BEFORE, IN THAT INTERESTING QUOTE THAT I'VE TOLD YOU I LIKE SO MUCH WHERE YOU SAY THAT YOU'RE NOT SURE IF YOUR PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE IS AS GOOD AS IT COULD BE, BUT MAYBE IN TWO OR THREE YEARS DOWN THE LINE WHEN YOU GET YOURSELF FEELING THAT WAY YOU'LL PICK UP BOOKS ON "HOW TO"? DOES THAT GO ALONG WITH HOW YOU'RE LEARNING TO DO THINGS ON YOUR OWN NOW BECAUSE YOU KNOW THERE'S A GAP BETWEEN WHAT YOU DIDN'T LEARN LAST YEAR, BUT YOU'RE NOT READY TO LEARN THEORETICAL THINGS YET?

7C7 Yeah, I think so. I think that now that when I pick up a book I can see, "Oh, yeah!" For example, in Reading. Inventive Spelling -- when the lady talked last week about inventive spelling and how kids learn, I can finally say, "Yes, that makes sense! It's realistic!" You know, I can apply that to my classroom, yes it is important that kids know how to write, it is important that they know the emphasis on certain things, it is important to do such-and-such. Where before I think I might have said, "Sure, yeah." It's like going to university. How much of this stuff do you really use that you study in university? Sure, you do a History paper on

the Trent-Severn Waterway -- unless you have some kind of thing you can put that to, how long are you going to remember that or what's it really worth. It's just something you learn.

SO, IF I CAN PARAPHRASE THAT MAYBE? PRACTICE IS IMPORTANT IN ORDER FOR YOU TO UNDERSTAND THEORY?

8C7 Yeah, you have to have a bit of theory to begin with I think. I don't know.

I DON'T LIKE THROWING THOSE WORDS AT YOU OR PUTTING THEM IN YOUR MOUTH -- I'M NOT TRYING TO DO THAT, THAT'S JUST THE WAY I'M THINKING ABOUT IT AND I'M WONDERING WHERE THE GAP CAME FROM -- OBVIOUSLY, YOU'VE GOT TO HAVE A FIRST YEAR. THAT MAKES SENSE. YOU'VE GOT TO LEARN SOMEWHERE THAT THERE'S THINGS THAT NOBODY CAN SHOW YOU HOW TO DO EXCEPT WHEN YOU'RE WITH REAL LIVE KIDS BY YOURSELF.

9C7 But there has to be more -- the gap has to be filled in more between theory and practicalities. Even when I got here to Clarendon Road, the principal said to me, "Well, you can forget all the theory you learned at -- now you're in the real world. You students all come out with all this theory and ideas and how much are you going to put into practice? You've never been out here and you don't know what it's going to be like." And I felt like saying, "Well!"

SO THAT WAS HIS ATTITUDE. BUT DID YOU THINK YOU HAD JUST THEORY THOUGH?

10C7 I didn't because I'd had the extra practice. I felt like saying, "Well, I was in a Pilot Project and I was in the schools since Thanksgiving -- I have a little bit more on my shoulders than a Consecutive student who has a total of about 8 weeks in the classroom." I don't know how -- I think it's criminal that Consecutive students do that. Mind you, they're probably just as good teachers, some of them. I wonder if you could do a survey finding out the difference between Consecutives and Concurrents?

I'M VERY INTERESTED IN THAT DIFFERENCE. I THINK THERE IS QUITE A DIFFERENCE AND I'M REALLY INTERESTED TO KNOW WHAT IT IS. I WAS A CONSECUTIVE STUDENT, FOR INSTANCE, AND I DO SEE SOME DIFFERENCES. I'M VERY ENVIOUS OF SOMEONE WHO CAME THROUGH AND HAD FOUR YEARS OF EVEN LITTLE BITS IN THE CLASSROOM. I DIDN'T, AND I'M REALLY INTERESTED IN THAT BECAUSE I THINK THERE ARE SO MANY THINGS GO ON IN CONCURRENT EDUCATION THAT MIGHT NOT BE PERFECT BUT AT LEAST IT'S BETTER? I THINK THERE'S A DEFINITE ADVANTAGE FOR PEOPLE IN CONCURRENT.

11C7 Well, look at the time. Consecutives only go out for two weeks at at time. The idea of doing a song-and-dance act for two weeks and getting a good report. There's no way they can plan a thematic unit in two weeks and present it and test the results.

YOU DO, BUT I DON'T REALLY KNOW HOW I EVER DID IT AND I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE KIDS EVER GOT OUT OF IT. YOU'RE JUST LEARNING NAMES BY THE END OF THE FIRST WEEK. I HAD TO COME IN TWICE, WITH A UNIT PREPARED, IN TWO OF MY ROUNDS. I REMEMBER I HAD TO COME IN ONCE WITH A GRADE 5/6 UNIT IN SOCIAL STUDIES PREPARED, BEFORE I EVEN KNEW THE KIDS AND I HAD TO TEACH IT TO THEM STARTING THE FIRST DAY. IT HAD TO BE A FOURTEEN DAY UNIT. (How can you do that?) I DON'T KNOW WHAT I DID! I JUST HAD THIS STUFF ALL READY AND WENT IN ON DAY ONE AND IT WAS "HERE WE GO." AND I DID THE SAME THING IN A GRADE FOUR CLASS -- A SCIENCE UNIT. I WAS TO GO IN WITH A SCIENCE UNIT AND START FIRST DAY. (You don't even know what their level is!) NO. THAT KIND OF THING IS WHAT I THINK IS CRIMINAL TOO. BECAUSE NOT ONLY WAS I BEING MADE TO DO THINGS THAT WERE NOT APPROPRIATE FOR WHAT I WAS LEARNING, BUT ALSO THE KIDS WERE BEING SUBJECTED TO SOMEONE WHO WAS BASICALLY JUST THROWING INFORMATION AT THEM. I WASN'T TEACHING THEM. I'M JUST VERY INTERESTED IN NOW HOW YOU AS YOU LOOK AT THAT (DATASCAN) -- THAT I SEE SO FAR THIS YEAR FOR YOU HAS HAD THREE STAGES OR SECTIONS, AND YOU'RE IN SORT OF THE THIRD SECTION, I WOULD SAY. THE FIRST SECTION IS WHERE YOU REALLY DEALT A LOT WITH PRE-SERVICE TRAINING AND WHERE ITS DEFICIENCIES WERE AND WHAT IT DID AND DIDN'T DO FOR YOU AND HOW IT LEFT A MARK ON YOU AND THEN IN ABOUT NOVEMBER I SAW IT CHANGING TO "NOW I'M TEACHING MYSELF HOW TO DO THINGS -- I'VE GOT REAL KIDS TO WORK WITH AND I'M LEARNING HOW TO DO REAL THINGS IN THE CLASSROOM -- AND I'M SCROUNGING AROUND FOR BOOKS AND IDEAS AND I'M GETTING THINGS TOGETHER." NOW, IN MARCH, I SEE IT AS -- "I'M MORE CONFIDENT WITH THAT BECAUSE I'VE TAUGHT MYSELF SOME THINGS, AND I KNOW WHAT WORKS AND WHAT DOESN'T REALLY WORK WITH MY KIDS AND WITH MY GRADE LEVEL, AND NOW I'M STARTING TO LOOK AT THE KIDS AND I'M REALLY WONDERING HOW THEY LEARN AND HOW CAN I BEST MEET THEIR LEARNING STYLES?" I SEE THOSE THINGS.

12C7 It's good, now that you say it like that. But you need someone like you to watch me and tell me, because I would never take the time to sit there and think about it.

THAT LEADS INTO SOMETHING I'VE WANTED TO ASK YOU THE LAST COUPLE OF TIMES AND I KEEP FORGETTING. WHAT DOES MY COMING DO, BASICALLY?

13C7 It helps me put things into perspective. It helps me to reflect. Because I wouldn't find the time otherwise to reflect. It helps me -- it encourages me. Talk to my mother about that one. It helps me to realize that I'm not doing everything wrong, that yes, an experienced teacher like you has gone through the struggles, you see the kids as I see them, it's not my imagination. So that's important. Even when the Vice-Principal came in and he didn't tear me to shreds like the principal did before, I felt a sigh of relief! I thought, "Oh, well I'm not a total wipe-out." And they're not going to fire me at the end of the year, and I've gained in confidence! And then you hear on the news that they're going to make the Bachelor of

Education four years -- actually Stephen was told -- they went through the whole pay scale, and they'll get paid 60% the first year, 80% the next year (THIS IS THE PROPOSAL?) This is the proposal -- so it might have a good chance of going through. But 60%, 80%? For four years -- until you've finished, and then you should be making about as much as a doctor. I don't think that'll ever happen.

DO YOU THINK THAT WOULD IMPROVE TEACHER EDUCATION?

14C7 Well, I think four years is a little bit too much. I would be frustrated if I had had to wait. How can you expect someone right out of university to only be paid 60% what a teacher gets paid. You couldn't live. Unless you had part-time work.

I'M THINKING BACK TO MY FIRST YEAR AND WHAT I GOT THEN AND WHAT THE COSTS OF LIVING WERE TOO. THERE'S NO WAY I COULD LIVE NOW ON WHAT WOULD PROBABLY BE ABOUT 50% OF WHAT YOU'RE MAKING. I GUESS WHAT I'M THINKING OF TOO, PUTTING THAT ASIDE FOR JUST A MINUTE, I'M THINKING OF LENGTH OF TIME -- WOULD THAT IMPROVE --

15C7 No, it's too long. You get in there -- kids learn despite the fact -- whether you're teaching them. Unless you're a total wipe-out as a first year teacher. Yes, I've said to you before that I sometimes think my kids are guinea pigs. But, sometimes I think, "Well, because it's my first year, and I'm so keen -- probably they're getting more from me than they're getting from someone who's been teaching twenty years and doesn't care to change anything." So, they might fill the kids' heads with the curriculum better than I do, but -- BUT IS THAT IMPORTANT? No and I don't think you need five years of university. I think you should be able to go -- if right out of Grade Thirteen, you could go to Teachers' College, that's what you need. How much more do you need? Sure, I enjoyed university, and I went for myself and for learning and academically I enjoyed it, but so what? Geography did nothing for my teaching of Grade 2. IT JUST GAVE YOU MORE BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE MAYBE -- MORE CONFIDENCE IN YOURSELF AS A KNOWLEDGEABLE PERSON? Maybe. I feel nice to be considered a professional, I like that aspect of it.

THAT'S SOMETHING THAT INTERESTS ME TOO. THERE'S CERTAIN THINGS THAT EVERYONE HAS SAID AND THAT YOU HAVE SAID SPECIFICALLY -- FOR INSTANCE, WHEN [PRINCIPAL] CAME IN THAT TIME AND SAW YOU TEACH AND WROTE UP THE EVALUATION AND WAS NEGATIVE IN THE WAY HE PRESENTED THE REPORT AND YOU SAID, "YOU DON'T DO THAT! YOU DON'T START RIGHT IN WITH CRITICISM -- THAT'S BASIC!" AND I AGREED WITH YOU. BUT I'M INTERESTED IN KNOWING WHERE SOMETHING LIKE THAT COMES FROM -- IS THAT YOUR PERSONALITY OR IS THAT SOMETHING YOU LEARNED ALONG THE WAY AS A STUDENT?

16C7 Well, probably part of my personality -- I think it's part of your personality and I think maybe you even learn it as part of your social structure at school. You always try to start with the positive and you end on the positive. Don't you? I think you should. Did I learn it somewhere? (WHEN YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT THE RED PENS --) Now, that's

common sense. (TO YOU?) Yes. That's common sense to me now, but it had to be pointed out to me. I felt hedgy using red pens and I wasn't sure why. But I realize all the talk about -- I can remember one class, you'd get a paper back and it would have red ink all over it. Or you're in high school and it's all marked up with red. That just destroys you. You've done all that work -- and it's all marked up.

THAT'S NEAT. THERE'S SO MUCH IN HERE [DATASCAN] AND I KNOW YOU SAID THAT YOU WANT TO READ IT MORE AND MAYBE AFTER THE MARCH BREAK WHEN I SEE YOU WE CAN GET INTO MORE OF THIS, AND WHAT I THINK I SHOULD DO, THINKING ABOUT IT NOW IS -- GO AWAY AND HIGHLIGHT THINGS THAT I THINK ARE REALLY IMPORTANT AND MAYBE WHILE YOU'RE READING IT COULD YOU DO THE SAME? AND SEE HOW WE MATCH? (Sure.) MAYBE WE WON'T MATCH AT ALL AND THAT'S O.K. TOO. BUT THERE ARE CERTAIN SENTENCES OUT OF IT ALL THAT I WOULD LIKE TO GO INTO MORE IF WE GET THE TIME. AND ONE OF THEM WOULD BE THIS PASSAGE IN THE "SELF-TAUGHT LEARNER" SECTION -- THERE IS SO MUCH IN THAT! FOR ME THERE IS. AND I JOTTED DOWN SOME NOTES --

17C7 This thing about being professional -- it comes to my mind quite a bit. You know when we were in the staffroom today and I was talking to that one teacher about Lori. And I notice that Cathy doesn't talk about her kids. Well, she does talk about them but I always feel kind of guilty that I've brought it up. Maybe I should be more professional and keep it all bottled inside and never say anything about any of the kids. WHY DO YOU THINK THAT'S BEING PROFESSIONAL? Well, it's because I don't like the idea of going into a staffroom and spending all lunch hour picking kids apart. And giving other teachers pre-conceived ideas about other kids that are coming into their classes.

IT'S SOMETIMES A WAY OF LETTING OFF STEAM, TOO ISN'T IT?

18C7 It is, but I always feel guilty.

WELL, I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN -- BUT HERE I WROTE DOWN, "DO PEOPLE GET THE WHY?" YOU SAID IN HERE, "IT SHOULDN'T BE THAT WAY, I SHOULD HAVE ALL THAT THEORY AND THEN BE ABLE TO APPLY IT." DO PEOPLE GET THE WHY AND THEN APPLY IT OR DO YOU, DURING YOUR APPLICATION -- DURING YOUR PRACTICE ARE YOU GETTING THE WHY? ARE YOU DRAWING THEORY OUT OF YOUR PRACTICE OR ARE YOU RELATING BACK TO LAST YEAR AND SAYING, "OH, YEAH."

19C7 Well, you've got to use your common sense. That plays a big part. For spelling, what words do you give them to spell. I question all the time, "Why am I doing this?" "Is this important?" I give them a list of spelling words -- so why should they know how to spell "beaver". I do the months of the year, the days of the week, the common words like "where" or if I find a word that they're continually not spelling right, like "girl" I put that on my spelling list. So you learn -- I don't think anyone ever told me that this is how you're going to do your spelling program. I guess it's just common sense and it's innate. Unless you

use a speller and it's got all those things set up for you anyway and you don't have to think about it.

DO YOU THINK AT THE END OF THIS YEAR YOU'LL HAVE A SPELLING PROGRAM THAT IS BASICALLY OR LOOSELY SUITED TO GRADE TWO AND YOU CAN MODIFY IT TO PARTICULAR KIDS?

20C7 I don't know. I think -- I'm conscious of the time aspect of the spelling. It takes all Monday morning. You have to dictate it, you have to check it. They have to write it out and take it home to their parents. Then, ten minutes every day -- they love spelling. If I say to them, "There will be no spelling today." -- it's terrible! They love going to the blackboard and writing their words, playing hangman with a friend, making words out of plasticine and painting them, acting them out -- they love it. And so I think that's a bonus because they're liking to use words and manipulate them so I've got them there and they don't know it. I wonder now if you took a poll of all the words -- are they actually improving, I don't know. The ones that have always known how to spell are becoming better but those ones that are always low, they're maybe getting more confident and enjoying it which is maybe good but I don't really know if they're learning how to spell the words. I hope they are. Through repetition -- how else do you do it?

BUT YOU MUST SEE PROGRESS IN THEIR WRITING FOLDERS.

21C7 I see progress in the Writing Folders as far as the length of the things that they're writing, I'm always pleased when they write and there's not a sound. They're really into it, which at the first of the year wouldn't have happened. It was, "I don't know what to write."

SO THEY'RE ENJOYING WORKING WITH WORDS MORE?

22C7 I think so.

SO WILL YOU SIT DOWN AT THE END OF THE YEAR AND TRY TO DRAW TOGETHER THE VARIOUS THINGS YOU HAVE DEVELOPED OR WILL YOU SAY, "FORGET IT, I'M GOING TO HAVE DIFFERENT KIDS NEXT YEAR, I MIGHT AS WELL START FROM SCRATCH."

23C7 No, I'll probably do a lot of the things I've learned this year. I'll probably do similar spelling things but modify it in some ways. I'll probably do the reading groups but I'll have my materials so I'll be able to foresee and I'll have Math centres set up. I want to have all the centres set up at the beginning of the year with all the stuff there, so that it will be there all done and just add to it and take away. And I think I'll have more stuff around the room. With Math, there's a checklist you have to check off. It's really weird to get into this rut, you think, "Well, I can't do Measurement now because I'm doing counting now. So I can't combine the two. I'll do counting and then I'll handle Measurement." Instead of having a thermometer in your classroom all year round and letting the kids see it all the time and having a Measurement centre all year round and changing the task cards of the activities -- right now I can only think of one thing at a time.

DO YOU THINK THAT WILL CHANGE?

24C7 I think it will, when I get more confident in what I'm teaching. The Grade 3 teacher said to me, "Rachel, whatever you do, don't feel like you have to check off the checklist. It's more important if you only check off one thing there and they know that concept inside and out." And I know that but it's hard when you're thinking that they'll think you're stupid because you don't have all these things checked off. That's what I did with counting. I made sure every kid got up to 1000. And some kids, there's about four who haven't. And I'm going to give them to them to do on the March Break. They know the idea of doing it, they know the 600, 700 sheet -- I don't know if they understand the idea of Place Value or not.

IT'S HARD TO KNOW THAT ISN'T IT? DO YOU THINK YOU ARE LEARNING MORE ABOUT HOW TO UNDERSTAND WHEN LEARNING GOES ON? THAT'S A HARD QUESTION. I'M REALLY INTERESTED THOUGH, AND THAT'S SORT OF WHAT THIS RESEARCH IS TRYING TO GET AT--HOW DO YOU KNOW WHY YOU CHOOSE TO DO CERTAIN THINGS IN THE CLASSROOM?

25C7 And it's almost like the professors at [Faculty of Education] -- they're interested in their research that has nothing really to do with teachers. If it did, then things would be changed. It's like the Primary-Junior consultant who hasn't taught in the classroom for twenty years. The same as the professor who hasn't taught in the classroom. They should have some sort of refresher course every few years -- like every Friday at the schools. I know that sounds wild, but if their information is going to be of any worth --

JUST FOR YOU AND YOUR "NITTY-GRITTY" WHICH I THINK IS VERY INTERESTING. IF SOME PROFESSORS HAD SPENT ONE DAY A WEEK OUT IN A GRADE TWO ROOM THEY WOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO BETTER COMMUNICATE TO YOU THE NEED FOR ROUTINES FOR EXAMPLE?

26C7 Yes. Have any of those professors even taught Primary kids? Have they taught -- how long have they taught -- when did they teach? Twenty years ago?

THOSE ARE VERY IMPORTANT QUESTIONS. BECAUSE I GET THE FEELING, THAT THAT MIGHT HAVE HAPPENED. SAY YOU'VE BEEN WITH SOMEONE WHO KNEW THAT PRIMARY KIDS NEED ROUTINES. OR THAT YOUR ROOM WILL BE RUN MORE EFFECTIVELY IF YOU HAVE ROUTINES. SO THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN A NITTY-GRITTY THING THEY COULD HAVE PASSED ALONG TO YOU? (Yeah.) AND THEY SAY, "WELL, YOU'LL GET THAT IN THE PRACTICUM." YOU DON'T ALWAYS, BECAUSE YOU'VE TALKED ABOUT ENDING UP WITH --

27C7 A bum teacher. And also, theory tells you -- like Brenda and I always say there has to be a balance between this conservative structure and this free-for-all. But at [Faculty of Education] and even at the Board, your ideal situation is -- it appears -- to be at the free-for-all end. And you don't realize all the structure that goes behind that, but it's there. And the routines are there. And to them it's, "Well, you set the centre up here, you set the centre up there" and sure it will be fine. It's like the Primary Consultant. She's the

laughingstock of the Board, according to all the teachers, because she says, "Oh yes! You can put this centre here, you can put that centre there!" I mean, she's giving Board policy and it's very nice. She's near the Renewal stage and a lot of the teachers are back at the -- not even the Exploration -- I forget what the other stage is called.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THOSE?

28C7 Well, there are different stages -- the end is Renewal and the beginning is -- the criterion is your seating plan --

THIS IS YOUR BOARD POLICY?

29C7 Yes. Your seating plan, do the kids mark their own work, do the kids -- are there centres, do they get choices, and those are all the different types. And it appears that the more open you are and the more hands-on or free-for-all type thing you have, then the more progressive you are. And you should be steering towards that. But I don't agree -- I think there's a balance. And especially for a first year teacher, you've got to start at this [Exploration] end and I don't care what you're taught at [Faculty of Education] you have to start at the end where you are structured -- not necessarily in rows, but until you get your feet on the ground, and you can gradually get all the material together and work towards that. Unless you're an excellent teacher. And for some reason, I heard at the Primary Consultant thing at the beginning of the year -- she was citing examples of people in the room and she said, "Well, this girl has only been teaching for two years and she has all the centres." And I'm thinking, "Oh, my goodness! Don't show her to me!" She must be one in a million.

THAT GOES ALONG WITH "WALKING THE PLANK" THOUGH DON'T YOU THINK? THIS GIRL WAS SAYING THAT SHE LIKED GROUP WORK -- AT THE HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL. I KNOW GROUP WORK HAPPENS A LOT MORE AT THE PRIMARY LEVEL, SO MAYBE THAT'S NOT SOMETHING YOU WOULD WORRY ABOUT, BUT THIS GIRL IS TEACHING HIGH SCHOOL. SHE LIKES GROUP WORK BUT SHE'S SCARED TO USE IT SOMETIMES BECAUSE IN THE GRADE NINE CLASSES THEY WOULD GO NUTS IN GROUPS. SO SHE ISN'T USING GROUP WORK ALL THE TIME, ONLY WHERE SHE FEELS SHE CAN CONTROL IT. TOM WAS SAYING TO HER, "WALK THE PLANK." DO IT EVEN THOUGH YOU'RE SCARED OF IT BECAUSE THE KIDS WILL BE SCARED OF IT TOO -- THAT'S WHY THEY'LL ACT OUT. THEY'RE NOT USED TO WORKING IN GROUPS IN GRADE NINE, THEY'RE USED TO BEING IN ROWS AND I CAN REALLY RELATE TO THAT BECAUSE WHEN I HIT JUNIOR HIGH, I HAD KIDS WHO WERE SO USED TO BEING IN ROWS, AND I'D BEEN IN ELEMENTARY FOR FOUR YEARS AND ALL OF A SUDDEN IT WAS, "LOOSEN UP GUYS! WE'RE PUSHING THE DESKS TOGETHER!" AND THEY DID GO NUTS ON ME. THEY WERE (SAYING) "WOW! THIS IS NEAT!" BUT ON THE OTHER HAND THEY WERE SCARED OF IT -- THEY WERE USED TO BEING IN ROWS. SO I THINK HE'S SAYING HERE THAT IT'S A WAY OF NOT GIVING IN TO THE PRESSURE OF THINKING THAT "MY TEACHING ISN'T LIKE WHAT I'M SEEING IN OTHER ROOMS AROUND ME, THEREFORE I'M WRONG." WHICH I THINK -- DO YOU THINK FIRST YEAR TEACHERS FEEL THAT

IT'S GOT TO BE LIKE THAT? I KNOW YOU'RE SAYING THAT YOU'VE GOT TO WORK THROUGH THESE STAGES, AND THAT IF YOU'RE NOT CONFIDENT IN ONE STAGE YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BE CONFIDENT IN THE NEXT, BUT IF YOU SAW SOMEBODY ACROSS THE HALL DOING (Rows?) THIS FREE-FOR-ALL THING, DO YOU THINK YOU WOULD THINK, "GEE, I'M NOT AS PROGRESSIVE AS HER."

30C7 Well, at first I thought that at the beginning of the year. The other teachers said to me, "How can you be doing centres in your first year? There's no way you can be doing it." And I thought, "Well, fine. That was the only thing I was taught to do at [Faculty of Education]. You people were taught to have them sitting in rows. You're supposed to be trying to get out of that." And then, I know that they're both [the Grade 2 teachers] quite structured. And the comment that the Vice Principal made to me was "You wouldn't be compatible with the others' teaching styles -- one's very vibrant and the other one's very quiet and meek and mild."

WHAT DOES THE VIBRANT ONE DO? IS SHE A FREE-FOR-ALL TYPE?

31C7 No, she's very structured, workbook type. But she also has a little bit more -- her personality is a lot more vibrant. But the other one -- I personally find her boring. She's very quiet, nine-to-five attitude. I'm sure she must have some -- I've never seen her in action, but that's the impression I have. No vitality. And so I think, I look at them -- even when we're going on a trip or anything, my kids might be noisy and yapping, but they're all, "Miss Linden look at this, Miss Linden, look at that!" Where she just sits there and it's like she's not there? I think I've got off the topic here. So what I'm saying is that if I saw somebody else, no I wouldn't be pressured -- I realize I'm a first year teacher and I'm going to make lots of mistakes. I've come to grips with that. Sure, I feel guilty if I think, "I haven't covered this and they have covered it." But I figure -- well, my kids are all different from theirs. I've got very little kids -- my kids are smaller physically, I have the low kids and I feel bad sometimes that that's what I got, but a first year teacher gets that.

BUT YOU'RE CONFIDENT ENOUGH -- AND WHAT YOU'RE SAYING IS REALLY IMPORTANT. AND SOMETHING THAT A LOT OF FIRST YEAR TEACHERS WOULD NEED TO HEAR. "HEY GUYS, I KNOW THAT I'M JUST A FIRST YEAR TEACHER. I'M GOING TO MAKE MISTAKES." THAT'S A REALLY HEALTHY THING TO BE THINKING AND I WANT TO IMPRESS THAT ON YOU. IT'S O.K. TO FEEL THAT WAY.

32C7 But then it comes -- if you're going to fail a kid, that really shakes me. Jennifer for example. It's not just "You failed a test." This is a year of her life. She is going to be a year behind her peers for the rest of her life. And you think, "Oh, my goodness. I've done this to the child." You can't take it home with you but -- it's really hard. And when you've got eight of them (potential failures) and then if the parents got together and said, "Miss Linden's class had eight kids fail. Is this because she's a new teacher or because she's got problems?" I DOUBT IF THEY'D DO THAT Oh, I don't know.

BUT THAT'S WHERE THE SUPPORT FROM -- AND I KNOW IT'S HARD TO INITIATE ALL THAT TOO, BUT IF YOU COULD GET SOME SUPPORT FROM THE GRADE THREE TEACHERS THAT, "YES, WE DON'T WANT THEM TO GO TO GRADE THREE NEXT YEAR."

33C7 Well, they don't want them. They've said so under no uncertain terms.

AND EVEN DOUG AT THE ADMINISTRATIVE LEVEL. IF HE'S OF ANY HELP IN COMING IN AND HELPING YOU TO DIAGNOSE AND ASSESS. YOU CAN'T --

34C7 I know, putting all that on my shoulders.

DON'T DO THAT. BECAUSE THEN YOU WILL BE GOING HOME WITH THIS BIG --

35C7 Another thing I learned is -- I learned it from another teacher and it's common sense again, but you have to kind of be made to see it -- is how important it is to cover yourself. Have all those records in front of you -- have all the evidence, so that I'm not going to come [to the parents] in June and they're going to say, "You never told me. You don't have anything to prove this." So that's what I'm going to do.

THAT'S RIGHT, AND I'D LIKE TO TALK TO BRENDA ABOUT THIS TOO BECAUSE I'M INTERESTED IN THE WAY BOTH SHE AND YOU ARE ABLE AND VERY CONFIDENT IN SAYING THINGS LIKE, "WELL, I LOOKED AT THE WAY SHE [ASSOCIATE] TAUGHT AND I DIDN'T LIKE IT -- I KNOW THERE'S THINGS I WOULDN'T DO." I THINK I COULD HAVE DONE THAT TO A CERTAIN EXTENT, BUT I GUESS IT'S PERSONALITY THAT DICTATES THAT A LOT. I'M THINKING OUT LOUD HERE AND I'M GOING OFF ON A TANGENT, BUT I WASN'T THAT CRITICAL, AND I REALLY WISH I HAD BEEN. I WISH I KNEW HOW --

36C7 Oh, do you know what that part of it is? I do think that Brenda has very strong ideas and I think I do too, but I think a lot of that came because we were both in the Pilot Project. We both had the same experiences. I wouldn't know that about [Associate] but I would know that about [Associate]. Brenda and I, every night, we went home and we'd say, "Yeah, I think the same thing as you do!" So we felt supported. That really makes a difference.

I THINK SO, BECAUSE IT WASN'T UNTIL I CAME BACK FROM MY SECOND YEAR OF TEACHING AND PEOPLE STARTED TO SAY TO ME, "YOU'VE CHANGED." I SAID, "WHAT?" AND THEY SAID, "YOU'RE A LOT MORE ASSERTIVE AND A LOT MORE CONFIDENT." I USED TO BE SHY AND A REAL LONER AND NEVER TALKED TO ANYBODY AT [FACULTY OF EDUCATION] AND TEACHING HAS BROUGHT ME OUT OF MY SHELL -- BROUGHT OUT THE TALKER IN ME -- WHATEVER! MAYBE BECAUSE I'VE ALWAYS BOTTLED UP STUFF THAT NOW I FEEL I'VE GOT TO SAY IT ALL, AND NOW I'VE GOT THE CONFIDENCE -- MAYBE EVEN FROM JUST STANDING UP IN FRONT OF A BUNCH OF GRADE 2 KIDS GAVE ME THE CONFIDENCE I NEEDED TO GO AHEAD AND BE MYSELF. I THINK IF I

WENT BACK AND DID B.ED. OVER AGAIN, I KNOW HOW CRITICAL I'D BE NOW AS COMPARED TO SEVEN YEARS AGO. I'M JUST SEEING THIS CHANGE IN MYSELF, AND THAT'S WHAT MADE ME ASK YOU. BECAUSE I'M SEEING YOU -- YOU'RE FIVE OR SIX YEARS YOUNGER THAN ME, SITTING THERE AND SAYING --

37C7 Do you think that's the difference between Concurrent and Consecutive again?

I THINK IT MUST HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH IT. YOU MUST HAVE ACCUMULATED SOME EXPERIENCE DURING THOSE FOUR YEARS THAT MADE YOU IN YOUR FOURTH YEAR THE MOST APPRECIATIVE OF WHAT YOU SAW AND ABLE TO SAY, "NO, I DON'T LIKE THIS -- YES, I DO LIKE THIS." BRENDA SAID THAT BY APRIL SHE WAS ABLE TO SEE A GOOD TEACHER WHEREAS IN OCTOBER SHE WAS STILL LOOKING AROUND THE ROOM, COPYING BULLETIN BOARDS ETC.

38C7 Yes, I can agree with that.

THAT'S WHAT MY GRIPE WITH THE CONSECUTIVE PROGRAM IS. IT'S SO FAST, AND I GUESS I'M NOT A FAST PERSON. I NEED TIME TO SIT AND THINK ABOUT STUFF. AND I DIDN'T HAVE TIME. YOU'RE JUST IN AND OUT OF ROOMS -- TWO WEEKS -- WEEKS -- TWO WEEKS. I CAME OUT IN JUNE THINKING, "WOW! WHAT A YEAR!"

39C7 I remember all the teachers I had, even [Associate], the things I learned from that teacher. The things that when I look back at her classroom, that I wouldn't do now. And then I look at the different teaching styles, and the way they evaluate -- I think my pet peeve with [Associate] was that she seemed to do no evaluation and no -- kids were getting away with murder. It wasn't structured enough? There was something missing the mark -- I don't know what it was, I can't pinpoint it. Everything was "wonderful" It was [in my mind] "What this kid is giving you is crap -- you may love this kid to death but it is not wonderful." She used to say, "Everybody should play. You should never have homework in Grade 7 and 8." My parents are British and [I was brought up to believe that] you should work -- I don't know if that has anything to do with the instillment of working, but --

WELL, THAT'S SOMETHING THAT I THINK ABOUT TOO, AND I'VE GOT TO WORK THAT OUT IN MY MIND, BUT I REALLY FEEL THAT WHEN WE'RE DEALING WITH TEACHERS WE HAVE TO REMEMBER THAT WE ARE DEALING WITH PEOPLE WITH A LOT OF INBORN AND INNATE AND HOMEGROWN THEORIES ABOUT THINGS. WE'RE NOT GOING TO ALWAYS BE ABLE TO SAY, "THAT'S BECAUSE THEY'RE A TEACHER." BUT YOUR COMMENTS, FOR INSTANCE. I BELIEVE THAT YOU AND I WERE BROUGHT UP IN A SIMILAR KIND OF WAY AND WE WERE TAUGHT TO USE OUR HEADS. THAT'S WHERE THE "COMMON SENSE" THING COMES IN? I THINK SOMEONE HAS SAID THAT TEACHING IS 90% COMMON SENSE. I SAID TO MYSELF, " I WONDER IF I CAN HANDLE IT?" I DIDN'T EVEN THINK I HAD ANY COMMON SENSE! BUT I SOON FOUND OUT

THAT I DID. THERE ARE SO MANY THINGS THAT HAPPEN IN A DAY WHERE YOU HAVE TO APPLY IT.

40C7 Well, the thing is -- when I plan a lesson or when I think about it -- when I plan a unit on Measurement I'll think, "O.K. I've got to get these things across to these kids -- why we're learning them." I hated it in school when I had to go through things -- like relations in Physics and I was thinking, "I'll probably never use this stuff again." I remember asking my teachers, "Why am I learning this? I hate it and I don't like it and I'm never going to use it." So when I started my Measurement, I said, "O.K. I want you to know why we are learning to measure. It's not because Miss Linden is up here and you have to do this on the report card." I said, "Why do we use Measurement? What things do we have to measure?" And they said, "Oh, we have to learn how to put up the wallpaper. We have to learn how to measure this and that." They're Grade 2's. They're not stupid. They can figure it out. And then I'll put the word "accurate" on the board. And I'll say, "Now, we're going to measure. There's something you have to make sure of." And we went through what would happen if you got ten feet of wallpaper and your wall was twelve feet high. Well, you've got to be accurate when you measure. So we went through that. And I felt really good that I'd got it across that we're not learning this because I'm telling you -- we're learning it because it is important and you have to know it and it's something that you will use. THAT'S REALLY NEAT. I LIKE THAT. And that's the way I think everything should be. HAVE A MEANING TO IT? Yes.

TAPE ENDS HERE.

Vita

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name: Charlotte Mary Susan Spafford

Place and Year of Birth:
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EDUCATION

1979-1980 Queen's University Bachelor of Education

1974-1979 Queen's University Bachelor of Music

1969-1974 Kingston Collegiate and Vocational Institute

EXPERIENCE

1986-1987 Research Assistant, Faculty of Education, Queen's University

1985-1986 Teaching Assistant, Faculty of Education, Queen's University

1984-1985 Teacher, Dr. Losier Junior High, Chatham, New Brunswick

1980-1984 Teacher, St. Michael's Elementary School, Chatham, New Brunswick

AWARDS

1976 Kingston Music Club Award

PUBLICATION

In press. Researchers' personal knowledge: A response to Clandinin and Connelly (with H. Munby), *Journal of Curriculum Studies*.

CONFERENCE PAPER

1986 Teachers as reflective practitioners in peer clinical supervision (with T. L. Russell). Paper presented at the meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, April, 1986.